

INVESTIGATING LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN
SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS SERVING ELA LEARNERS
WITH A FOCUS ON MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT

by

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Investigating Leadership Practices in Successful Schools Serving ELA Learners With A
Focus On Mathematics Achievement

Thesis directed by Connie L. Fulmer.

ABSTRACT

This study defines and analyzes the successful leadership practice of a principal of an urban K-8 school serving English Language Learners in the western United States during the 2012-2013 academic year. Focusing on the self-identified leadership practice of a school leader evidenced to positively affect student learning, this study seeks to extend knowledge about what principals actually do to within the context of their schools to improve academic achievement for students. A definition of an applied leadership practice is constructed based on a review of relevant literature and evidence gathered in this study. The successful principal was measured via the VAL-ED Assessment in Education in order to validate the strongest components and processes of that leader's leadership practice. Then, two principal interviews were conducted and coded to show alignments of the described leadership practices with two evidenced based frameworks; the VAL-ED Matrix and the Essential Supports and Indicators Framework. The first interview detailed the principal's leadership practice as they conceived it and experienced it. The second interview was a narrative reflection of how critical work and life incidents were perceived to have shaped the principal's leadership practices, and why these leadership practices emerged and flourished within their particular school and community context. Findings from other schools involved in this research were investigated to ascertain which Essential Supports and Indicators specifically connected to success or failure in mathematics are found in other schools conducting this research. The results of

this research provide a more complete description of a successful leadership practice as it exists in practice in the described context.

This abstract accurately represents the content of the candidate's dissertation.
I recommend its publication.

Approved: Connie L. Fulmer, Ph.D.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the students who benefit from strong educational leaders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Purpose of Study	6
Research Questions	7
Conceptual Frameworks	8
VAL-ED Matrix	8
Essential Supports and Indicators	11
Significance of Study	13
Research Assumptions	14
Limitations or Delimitations	14
Operational Definitions	15
Summary	17
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	18
What Leaders Know about English Language Learners	18
Precursors of a Leadership Practice Construct	21
Effective Schools Research	21
Direct and Indirect Principal Effect on Student Achievement	23
Instructional Leadership	28
Early References to Leadership Practices	35
Leadership Practices Inventory	35
High Poverty – High Performance (HP-HP) Research	36

Distributed Leadership Practices	39
Conceptual Frameworks Supporting a Leadership Practice	41
Distributed Leadership Practice	42
VAL-ED Matrix	44
Essential Supports and Indicators (ES-I)	48
Definition of a Leadership Practice	51
Summary	55
III. METHODOLOGY	56
Methods	56
Case Study	56
Narrative Inquiry	57
Research Design Elements	58
Site Selection	58
Subjects	59
Unit of Analysis	59
Seven Stages of This Research	59
Instruments	63
VAL-ED Survey	63
Leadership Practices Interview Protocol	64
Narrative Inquiry Protocol	65
Data Collection	65
VAL-ED Survey Data	65
Leadership Practices Interview Protocol Data Collection	66

Narrative Inquiry Interview Protocol Data Collection	67
Data Analysis	68
VAL-ED Survey Data	68
Analysis of Leadership Practices Interview Data	69
Analysis of Narrative Inquiry Interview Data	69
Coding Inventories	69
Triangulation and Member Checking	70
Summary	71
IV. FINDINGS	73
Case Study Demographics	73
Research Question #1	75
A Leadership Practice Uncovered	76
Leadership Practice Triangle.....	77
Work Focus of Leadership Practice	78
Emergent Activities/Tools Related to the Work Focus.....	79
Work Focus of the Leadership Practice	78
Proximal Goals of the Work Focus.....	89
Distal Goals Resulting from the Work	95
Specific Leadership Practice Efforts Focused on ELA Learners.....	97
Research Question # 2	99
Research Question # 3	106
Research Question # 4	111
Research Question # 5	114

Definition of a Leadership Practice Prior to Study	115
Elements of a Leadership Practice that Emerged in Data Analysis	115
An Emergent and Applied Definition of a Leadership Practice	118
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS	120
Summary of Study	120
Conclusions	123
Summary of Key Findings	123
Summary of Key Findings and Relationship to Literature	128
Discussion and Implications of Findings	141
Recommendations for Practice	143
Recommendations for Principals	144
Recommendations for School Districts	145
Recommendations for Principal Preparation Programs	146
Recommendations for Research	147
Final Thoughts	148
APPENDIX	
A. VAL-ED Survey	151
B. Leadership Practices Interview Protocol	157
C. Narrative Inquiry Interview Protocol	182
D. Essential Supports and Indicators Coding Framework	183
E. Essential Supports and Indicators Codes Aligned with VAL-ED Core Components and Key Processes	184
REFERENCES	185

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

1.	VAL-ED matrix	8
2.	Essential supports and indicators	12
3.	Direct versus indirect effects of principal upon student achievement	25
4.	Linking leadership to learning	27
5.	Readiness model for school turnaround.....	37
6.	Constituting elements of a leadership practice	43
7.	Utilizing three theoretical frameworks to define a leadership practice	54

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1.	A Derived Leadership Practice Logic Model	79
2.	VAL-ED Core Component and Key Processes Ratings.....	100
3.	Mean Effectiveness of Core Components and Key Process	101
4.	VAL-ED Core Component/Key Processes Ratings	103
5.	Core Components and Key Processes Code Frequencies.....	104
6.	Essential Support (ES) and Indicator (I) Code Frequencies (n) Resulting from Transcript Analysis	105
7.	ES-I Codes Associated with Math Improvement	112
8.	Frequency Count for ES-I Codes for Four Study Schools	113

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

My commitment to mathematics education for ELA students is experienced from the vantage point of my position at a small alternative education campus where I split my time between a mathematics classroom and performing the duties of dean of students. The students attending the school where I work are almost 100% at risk for academic failure, almost 100% ELA students, and almost 100% of them are recipients of free and reduced lunch. I tend to feel uniquely torn between the demands of the classroom and the pressures of the administrator. I want both that classrooms stay small and that our school grows large. I guard my classroom instruction time, but also pull students out of classes in my role as the School Assessment Coordinator. I require a challenging and rigorous classroom experience for my students, yet as an administrator, I seek high passing rates. I find myself pushing against a pervasive social structure and school system that doesn't seem to fit the needs of my students, yet my goal is to invite students into a place within the same system. It is a maddening yet enlightening position that requires a unwavering vision of success within a context of extraordinary student needs, growing teacher fatigue levels and policy driven high stakes testing.

Because I am in a school serving low-income English language acquisition (ELA) students, educational needs are varied and pervasive. Clarity of purpose can only be maintained by remaining vigilant about whether I am serving my students in the best and most efficacious way possible. Because of my divided position, it is especially clear that the decisions that I make as an administrator directly affect my own classroom experience and that of other teachers and students. Therefore, I am personally committed

to understanding the specific leadership behaviors that help teachers and students move toward their goals. My personal urgency stems from the national statistics about education of ELA-learners especially in the areas of literacy and mathematics.

Concerns about student achievement have spurred both mandates for improvements (NCLB, 2002) and an increased scrutiny of the practices that affect student achievement. The variables that impact change in schools are varied, and include school culture, teacher expertise, the classroom environment, and interactions with families and the larger community (Bryk, Sebring, Allenworth, Luppescu & Easton, 2010). It is building level leadership however, that shapes, directs, and motivates all other significant change efforts, and so has been identified as the driver of school level change (Bryk et al., 2010).

Although literature over the past two decades has clearly implicated school leadership as central to efforts to positively affect school outcomes (Bryk et al., 2010; Calkins, Guenther, Belfiore & Lash, 2010; Kutash, Nico, Gorin, Rahmatullah & Tallant, 2010; Seashore-Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom & Anderson, 2010), much less is known about how principals actually leverage change in their schools. Frameworks have emerged that organize leadership behaviors into categories, dimensions, indicators and related processes (Bryk et al., 2010; Goldring, Porter, Murphy, Elliott & Cravens, 2009), but there are no authentic and detailed descriptions of leadership practices that actually work in schools. In particular, research literature is almost completely lacking as to the principal's role in supporting instruction math and science (Lochmiller, Huggins & Acker-Hocevar, 2012).

This is particularly troubling because the influence of mathematics education is great in our society, and successful completion of the high school mathematics curriculum is a “primary filter” for determining students’ access to a wide variety of careers and therefore, economic survival (Moses & Cobb, 2001; Tate, 1997, 1994). Lack of mathematics achievement plagues ELA students disproportionately (Fry, 2003; NAEP, 2011). Success in secondary mathematics education is a potent influencer of college success, so it follows that ELA students end up at a considerable disadvantage if their high school mathematics skills are not sufficient to support the requirements of higher education (Adelman, 1999; Moses & Cobb, 2001; Tate, 1997, 1994).

Magnifying this issue is the fact that the number of ELA learners is growing in our country. Current census data indicate that school districts throughout the United States increasingly serve a student population whose home languages and cultures are diverse, (Slavit & Ernst-Slavit, 2007) with an estimated 5 million ELA learners in public schools (Mahoney, MacSwan, Haladyna & García, 2010). ELA students score lowest of any subcategory for NAEP testing, with over 70 percent testing “below basic” in mathematics which is the lowest category for the test. Further, the “gap” between the best students and ELA students has remained intransigent in recent years, whereas renewed efforts have shown gain in other categories such as learning disabled, eligibility for free and reduced lunch, and race/ethnicity such as Hispanic, Black, and Native American. (NAEP Mathematics, 2011).

The academic frustration encountered by ELA students is endemic in the state of Colorado. In a report from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Office of Language, Culture and Equity, Dr. Barbara Medina (2011) confirms that Colorado has

been a destination state for Latinos in the United States between the years of 1996 and 2011. Over those years, Colorado has experienced an over 100% growth in its ELA population. A few facts illustrating the urgency of the issue of equity of education for ELA students in the Denver metro area follow:

1. Over the past 10 years, the number of students enrolled in ELA programs in metro school districts had increased 120% percent (CDE).
2. ELA enrollment in one urban Colorado school district (Aurora Public Schools, APS) has doubled, from 21% to 40% of the student body. APS has a graduation rate of 48.5% for all students and 31.5% for students with limited English language proficiency. In 2011, the two largest urban Denver area school districts serving high poverty students (APS and Denver Public Schools) make up 24% of the metro school districts enrollment, but enroll a disproportionate 51% of the ELA students (CDE).
3. In a research area called the Denver Corridor which is a 14-mile long stretch and includes 13 Denver neighborhoods and one Aurora neighborhood, roughly 32,500 school-age children (ages 5 to 17) live in linguistically isolated households, which means no one over age 14 speaks English “very well” (American Community Survey, 2010).
4. In the Denver Corridor, less than half of sixth-graders are proficient or advanced at math. More than 80% of schools in this corridor are under-performing (Denver Children’s Ed Stats, 2012).

The only nationally representative assessment of student achievement, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) provides further evidence calling

for reform of ELA students' experiences of mathematics and literacy. For instance, results from the NAEP 2011 exam show that the average scale score for ELA students is 244 with over 70 percent scoring below basic level, which is the lowest category of proficiency. Colorado's scale score is 243 with over 70 percent scoring in the below basic level. Colorado reports only 3 percent ELA students to be proficient or advanced in eighth grade mathematics (NCES, 2012). Dr. Barbara Medina of DPS comments that ELA student scores in mathematics begin to fall dramatically in middle school, and are at the crisis point by the time they enter high school. At the high school level, ELA students show the most marked unsatisfactory scores, with proficiency and above scoring less than 10 percent (Medina, 2011).

In light of the image painted by these statistics, schools in the metro area of Denver, Colorado provide a microcosm of how schools in the United States struggle to serve the urban poor, and especially ELA students. Understanding how successful schools in Denver serve ELA students living in poverty might be applied in a broader arena, since the population of ELA students is growing quickly in many places. Another reason for studying school leadership practices within the specific context of poor, urban ELA students is that recent research suggests that a leadership practice simply cannot be understood out of context. A surprising finding of Waters, Marzano and McNulty (2003) is that highly proficient leadership practices applied in the wrong context can have negative effects on student achievement by miscalculating the magnitude of change that is required. Yet, even though new, powerful frameworks that provide insight into leadership practices in urban schools have recently emerged (Bryk et al., 2010; Seashore-

Louis et al., 2010), they do not address the specific and growing category of need in many parts of the country, namely achievement for ELA students.

Statement of Problem

Therefore, this study aims to describe one of the most potent ingredients of successful schools—building level leadership—within the particular contexts of those schools that serve ELA students who live in poverty. This research is intended to add to our understanding about *what works* in an environment of high interest; that of the high poverty urban school that serves ELA learners. In spite of the pervasive pattern of failure among high-poverty urban schools that serve ELA learners, it is clear that some schools in those categories do succeed (Kutash et al., 2010). A critical missing piece of our understanding is the identification and description of the leadership practices in these successful schools. Positive school change must utilize the intervention of gifted building level leaders (Bryk et al., 2010; Seashore-Louis et al., 2010), but descriptions of specific leadership practices for schools serving ELA learners are almost non-existent, especially for the areas of math and science. This study purposes to document successful leadership practices in successful schools serving ELA learners.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this research is to identify specific and particularized leadership practices being used by a principal in a successful school serving ELA-learners. The findings of the study will contribute towards an understanding of how to positively impact academic achievement of ELA learners by identifying specific leadership practices of a principal of schools that is already meeting that challenge. This study will

specifically investigate the role of successful urban school leadership for ELA learners as it pertains to overall achievement with a focus on mathematics achievement.

Research Questions

The five research questions that guide this study are listed below.

1. Using the definition of a leadership practice as a guide (developed in Chapter II), what are the specific and particularized leadership practices being used by the principal in this study to ensure a positive impact of that school on student growth/achievement?
2. How do the identified successful leadership practices align with key conceptual and evidence-based frameworks (VAL-ED Matrix and the Essential Supports & Indicators Framework) used in this study?
3. How do stories of this principal's critical incidents (both work and life related) contribute to an understanding of how leadership practices were developed and why these leadership practices emerged and flourished within this particular school and community context?
4. What Essential Supports and Indicators related to relative success or failure in mathematics from the validated research of Bryk et al. (2010) are found in other schools conducting this research?
5. Based on a review of relevant literature (the conceptual underpinnings and evidenced-based strategies) and evidence gathered in this study, what is an emergent and applied definition of a leadership practice?

Conceptual Frameworks

Two conceptual frameworks guide this study. The first is the VAL-ED Matrix drawn from the work of Goldring et al. (2009). The second is the Essential Supports and Indicators framework from the work of Bryk et al. (2010). These two frameworks have been drawn from evidence-based research focused on the work of learner-centered leadership and the role of leadership as the driver of essential supports for school improvement.

VAL-ED Matrix

This first conceptual framework used in this study is the VAL-ED Matrix (see Figure 1). The matrix is composed of six-core components and six-key processes that

Core Components	Key Processes					
	Planning	Implementing	Supporting	Advocating	Communicating	Monitoring
High Standards for Student Learning						
Rigorous Curriculum (content)						
Quality Instruction (pedagogy)						
Culture of Learning & Professional Behavior						
Connections to External Communities						
Performance Accountability						

Figure 1. VAL-ED matrix of six core components and six key processes.

have been identified from research on learner-centered leadership (Goldring et al., 2009). The matrix illustrates 36 areas that are formed by the intersection of these components and processes.

The six core components that make up this matrix are linked to teachers' opportunities to improve their instruction and student learning and the processes through which the school leaders leverage these core components. The six core components of leadership follow with brief explanations:

1. High Standards for Student Learning – This component concerns the principal's assurance that the school culture is defined by a rigorous academic vision, and that individuals, curricular teams, and the entire school understands the goal of academic achievement.
2. Rigorous Curriculum – This aspect of the matrix refers to the rigor of the curriculum that is available to students. It requires that subject area instructors have clear and rigorous curricular goals for each individual student, and that challenging academic content is available to each student.
3. Quality Instruction – this component of the VAL-ED measurement matrix concerns the quality of the pedagogy provided by teachers in the school. A high quality pedagogical experience for students includes clear goals, masterful use of instructional materials, timely and meaningful feedback and assessment.
4. Culture of Learning & Professional Behavior – For students, a positive school culture may be manifested by supportive, responsive and safe environment that encourage students to succeed academically. For teachers, a positive school culture is also focused upon student success and improved professional practice rather than creating pleasant social experiences.
5. Connections to External Communities – This element of the matrix refers to the relationships that schools develop with community and family members and other

stakeholders beyond the student. External relationships have value beyond advertisement, and extend to local political, business, and religious leaders.

6. Performance Accountability – Accountability encompasses feedback mechanisms to staff about performance, data driven efforts to executed specific changes, and state mandated testing. Accountability systems are the feedback loop by which schools measure their own progress towards their goal of improvement.

The six key-processes of the VAL-ED matrix represent the processes by which each of the core components is executed. Each of these key processes is described below:

1. Planning – Effective leaders plan in order to predict needed resources such as people, time and money. Planning is also required in order to articulate what and how a program is to be executed. Planning, like the other key processes is necessary for all core components.
2. Implementing – Implementation is the execution of a task. It involves the step past planning, when a leader must actually put into practice whatever has become the focus of work.
3. Supporting – Support is ensuring that the key components that enable the success of a project are present. Leaders express personal interest in the activities of staff and ensure that necessary resources exist so that staff can enjoy success. This process is closely aligned with transformational leadership.
4. Advocacy – This column in the VAL-ED matrix contains leaders’ behaviors of advocacy for students. Principals will advocate for students outside of the school setting and after students leave school. Advocacy involves negotiations with

parents and community on behalf of certain disenfranchised groups of students to ensure equitable opportunities within and without the school walls.

5. Communicating – Through clear and constant communication with all stakeholders of schools, leaders articulate goals and expectations and celebrate school successes. Communication is central to all core components of the matrix. For example, accountability only has meaning once it is communicated to students, teachers, parents and community members.
6. Monitoring – Monitoring is the feedback loop by which the goals of the school are measured and evaluated. Monitoring is central for the accountability of students' achievements, teacher growth via professional development, and evaluating the school culture.

The VAL-ED matrix was selected for this study for two purposes. First, it provides a description of evidence based and validated leadership behaviors by which the principal will be measured and will define the highest scoring areas of functioning for the particular principal. Second, it allows the researcher to shape the interview process around the most cogent behaviors found in the VAL-ED survey.

Essential Supports and Indicators

The second conceptual framework used in this study is the Essential Supports and Indicators (ES-I) framework (Bryk et al., 2010) drawn from research that establishes *leadership* as the driver for school transformation. The ES-I framework was derived from a decade of research on Chicago schools that enjoyed academic success in spite of being in high-poverty and high-need communities. This conceptual framework depicts

how leadership as the driver of change in the larger school-community context acts upon the essential supports and indicators for school improvement is shown in Figure 2 below.

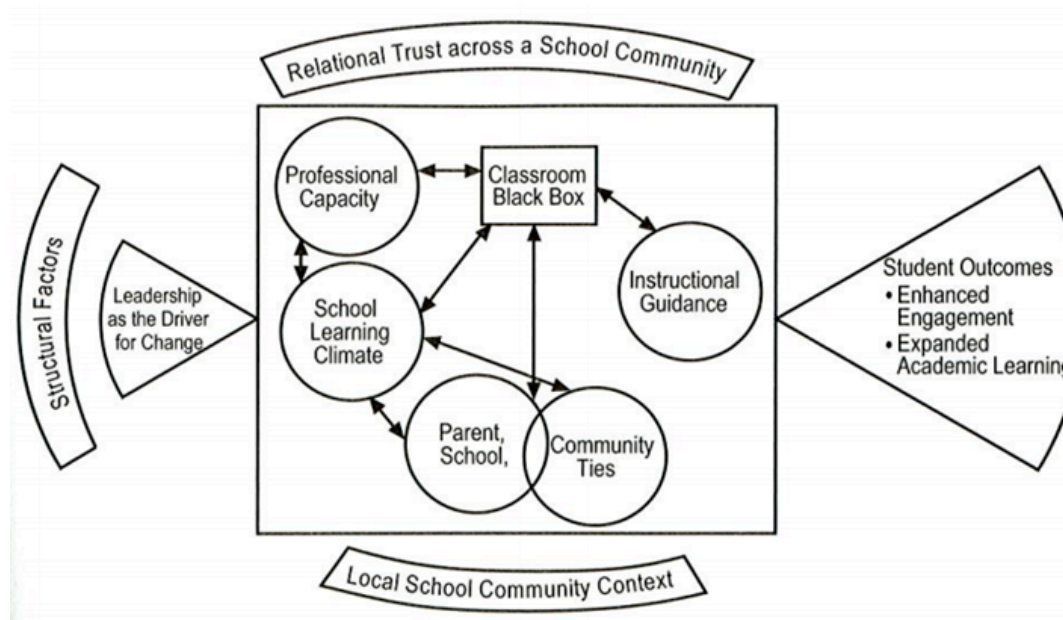


Figure 2. Essential supports and indicator framework.

These researchers (Bryk et al., p. 49) developed a conceptual framework from five essential supports that affect student achievement and positive school change. They include the following: (a) leadership as the driver for change, (b) professional capacity, (c) the school learning climate, (d) parent, school, community ties,/community relations learning climate, and (e) instructional guidance. These five supports are called essential because each must be present for the others to function.

In addition to the five essential supports, those researchers (Bryk et al., 2010) noted fourteen indicators that make up each of the five essential supports. These indicators are: (a) school leadership, (b) parent involvement, (c) teacher ties to community, (d) professional community, (e) work orientation, (f) teacher background, (g) change in human resources, (h) frequency of professional development (i) quality of professional development (j) academic support and press, (k) safety & order, (l)

curriculum alignment, (m) applications emphasis, and (n) basic skills emphasis. These researchers use the metaphor of baking a cake (p. 65), where each ingredient must be present for the result to produce the “cake” of school improvement.

This study is informed by both the Bryk et al. (2010) research in conjunction with the VAL-ED matrix to understand leadership practices for principals of chosen schools. The essential supports of the Bryk et al. (2010) work have been aligned with the VAL-ED matrix to shape the interview for the principal and will also guide the data analysis for this study.

Significance of Research

This study is significant for the following reasons:

1. This study uses two evidence-based frameworks (ES-I and VAL-ED Matrix) to provide a conceptual description and to identify actual instances of leadership practices associated with mathematics achievement currently being used by a principal leading a successful school serving ELA-learners. The result is a more complete understanding of the particular case of this leader in context of his or her school and his or her leadership practices employed in leading this school toward school goals.
2. Results from this study have the potential to impact professional development of other school principals or impact district policy related to English Language Acquisition.
3. This study is designed to identify leadership practices that have supported ELA-learners in core academic areas.

4. Overall, it is hoped that this new knowledge about of what it means for a principal to have a leadership practice will help other principals serving ELA-learners.
5. This research has the potential to inform practice, to prepare future educational leaders, and to inform policy related to school leaders.

Research Assumptions

This study is based on the following assumptions.

1. The school chosen as the setting for this study owes its success to the school leader, and not another separate, unrecognized factor.
2. Teachers, principals, and supervisors, and principal's supervisors will complete the VAL-ED Survey honestly.
3. During the interview, the principal will recall significant leadership practices with acuity and honesty and will not distort memories for the purpose of self aggrandizement and will credit others where it is due.

Limitations/Delimitations

For the purposed of this research, limitations are defined as those restrictions that are not within the researcher's control, while the delimitations are those things over which the researcher is defining the limits of the study.

The following is a list of limitations of this study.

1. Only a small group of schools met the criteria of this study. No high schools in DPS meet the criteria of the study.
2. The use of a case study limits results to the descriptive rather than the predictive (Merriam, 2009).

3. Inclusion and depth of detailed explanations and the length of stories will be defined by time constraints of the study.

Since the purpose of this study is to define leadership practices of successful schools with large numbers of high-poverty ELA students, this study is delimited to certain criteria. The school in this study has met the following research prescribed criteria.

1. The school has at least 100 ELA students.
2. At least 50% of students are on free and reduces lunch.
3. The school has an open enrollment policy, thereby subverting the criticism that only a special, more academically able set of students attends the school.
4. The principal must be serving in the school for at least three years so that the positive leadership affects may be confidently attributed to the present principal.
5. The school scores more than 50% on the growth section of the school's yearly growth assessments as defined by CDE measures.

Operational Definitions

The following operational definitions are used for the purposes of this study:

DPS – Denver Public Schools – An urban district in the Denver, Colorado metro area that is highly impacted by large numbers of ELA students and students living in poverty.

CAD – Computer Adaptive Testing - a form of computer-based test that adapts to the examinee's ability level.

CDE – Colorado Department of Education is the officiator and overseer of educational policy, practice, assessment and compliance for the state of Colorado.

CELA – Colorado English Language Assessment previously used to measure the attainment of English for students in grades K-12. This test was the defining measure for ELA students in Colorado at the time the school for this study was chosen.

CSAP – (Colorado State Assessment Program) – Statewide test used in Colorado to assess students in reading and writing in grades 3 – 10, and in science in grades 5, 8, and 10. Replaced by TCAP in 2012.

ELD – English Language Development

ELL – English Language Learner - Widely accepted term used to identify students who are not native English speakers.

ES-I – Essential Supports and Indicators describe the structural systems necessary to promote optimal conditions for learning as defined by Bryk et al. (2010).

ELA-Learner – K-12 students that have a native language other than English and are in a Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) that has been defined by the district.

In this document, this population is also referred to as linguistically and culturally diverse

NAEP – The National Assessment of Educational Progress is the national assessment of academic achievement for American students. NAEP results serve as a common metric for all states and selected urban districts.

SMART Goals – A mnemonic to help people set objectives that are Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound.

STAR Testing – A product of Renaissance Learning. A reading and mathematics survey CAT that provides growth data for students that is valid and has been used as a predictor for TCAP success

TCAP – (Transitional Colorado Assessment Program) – Statewide test used in Colorado to assess students in reading and writing in grades 3 – 10, and in science in grades 5, 8, and 10.

TNLI – (Transitional Native Language Instruction) is the program in which services, including *native language instruction* in Spanish, *supported English Content Instruction*, are provided to *ELLs*. Dual language programs qualify as part of the *TNLI* program.

Summary

This research responds to the challenge of increasing the success of students in urban high poverty schools by investigating the role of urban school leadership for ELA learners as it pertains to mathematics achievement. This study aims to provide specific, contextualized descriptions of leadership practices in order to better understand what has worked in successful schools serving ELA-learners. Two conceptual frameworks (the VAL-ED Matrix and the ES-I Framework) were described. Study assumptions, limitations and delimitations were discussed. Key terms were listed and described. The next chapter will provide a review of literature that supports the development and definition of a leadership practice drawn from the literature on effective leadership.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to the development of a definition for the construct of a leadership practice. The first section focuses on what we know about leadership for ELA learners. The second section outlines the precursors of a leadership practice and includes expanded discussions of effective schools research, direct and indirect effects of principal leadership, and instructional leadership. The third section details previous references to leadership practice and includes the following sections: (a) the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI), (b) High Performance–High Poverty (HP-HP) research, and (c) distributed leadership research. The fourth section describes how the two conceptual frameworks selected for this study (VAL-ED and the ES-I framework) help to define a leadership practice construct. The fifth section in this chapter presents a definition of a *leadership practice construct* that is drawn from this literature review and is used in this study to identify specific and particularized leadership practices currently employed by principals of successful schools serving ELA-learners.

What Leaders Know about English Language Learners

A variety of classroom interventions exist that positively impact the learning of ELA-students (Lochmiller, Huggins & Acker-Hocevar, 2012). For example, Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2008) provide a model for lesson planning and implementation that provides English learners access to grade-level content standards. Freeman and Freeman (2002) focus on the particular issues of secondary ELA students by organizing curriculum around themes, using predictable classroom routines, and scaffolding instruction in a variety of ways. Garcia (1991) outlined a set of effective instructional

practices that included organization of learning around themes and the consistent use of collaborative learning. Gay (2000) recommends that teachers develop a knowledge base about the cultures that they serve so that they can provide a culturally relevant curriculum to their students. Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti, (2005) provide a framework by which teachers may consider cultural diversity as a resource rather than as a deficit. Ladson-Billings (1995) describes the most effective classroom for ELA students as exhibiting pedagogical excellence steeped in cultural relevance. Mace-Matluck, Alexander-Kasparik, and Queen (1998) describe successful newcomer programs in secondary schools as providing multiple and flexible learning pathways. Ruiz-de-Velasco, Chu, and Clewell (2000) suggest the implementation of appropriate assessment techniques and programs that address literacy needs of secondary ELA students. Walsh (1999) adds the suggestions that classrooms employ a non-graded structure so that literacy can be addressed specifically without referencing a grade level norm.

Researchers also emphasize important areas beyond instructional style whereby building level leadership affects how ELA-learners are served in schools (Ruiz-de-Velasco, Chu & Clewell, 2000). Selective placement practices often situate ELA learners in an inflexible curriculum, especially in mathematics, where they find themselves diverted into a series of courses that neither prepares them for higher education nor for lucrative positions in the workforce (Oakes, 1985). Another issue is the impact of scheduling. Leadership must ensure that enough time is provided for the extra learning, support and practice time required by ELA students (Kostecki & Bers, 2009). Providing time for teachers to work and plan collaboratively is also a building-level decision that has shown promise as a way to improve collegiality and responsiveness to the particular

learning issues of ELA students (Fullan, 2007; Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson & Jinks, 2007; Walsh, 1999). Carrejo and Cortez (2010) suggest that principals can impact STEM related achievement of students by changing their leadership style from supervisory to more supportive, shared leadership style modeled after *communities of practice* and *transformational leadership*.

The High Poverty High Performance (HPHP) research of Calkins, Guenther, Belfiore, and Lash, (2007) catalogs how the culture of successful schools provide intense commitment to shared responsibility for learning. That is, both the school and the students are both flexibly accountable for student learning. Language and extraordinary personal circumstances are not to be used by faculty or students as an excuse for not learning. This insistence upon success was introduced by Reeves (2000) as the driving philosophy in the concept he named the 90/90/90 school wherein a school serving a population of students who are more than 90 percent eligible for free and reduced lunch, more than 90 percent ethnic minorities, and more than 90 percent meeting or exceeding high academic standards according to sanctioned tests of academic achievement. Leaders who make decisions about students facing extraordinary circumstances must take equal responsibility for providing opportunities for and insistence that students learn. That is, leaders must provide a system that is both accommodating towards and firmly focused upon learning.

Teacher professional development has also been a targeted area of interest in seeking improved response of ELA students to mathematics and STEM instruction (Buczynski & Hansen, 2010). Emerging mathematics leadership data suggests specific knowledge and content competencies—those related to K-12 mathematics curriculum

design, analysis, implementation, and evaluation are important as principals shape their leadership roles for mathematics (Cummings, 2011). This study intends to add to this information in the area of specific and particularized leadership practices that support ELA learners. To assist in this effort, this literature review now turns to the emergence of this leadership practice construct.

Precursors of a Leadership Practice Construct

The following paragraphs outline the precursors of the construct of a leadership practice as developed in the literature and as they exist in practice today. The first section below describes how the effective schools movement sought to show how schools do make a difference in the academic success of students. The second section discusses the development of the understanding of how instructional leadership influences student achievement. The third section focuses on attention to literature on instructional leadership and its impact on academic success.

Effective Schools Research

The investigation of how schools function began as a response to the 1966 Coleman Report—Equality of Educational Opportunity. Findings from that study were interpreted to mean that the background and socioeconomic status of the student more often determined educational outcomes than did differences in schools. In his seminal work, Coleman claimed that in American schools, high concentrations of students of color living in poverty were more predictive of their achievement than differences in school funding. Although it is a distortion of the Coleman findings to suggest that students' achievement is predetermined or that the quality of their schools does not matter, the Coleman report was groundbreaking both in its use of student achievement as

a measure of school success and as an alarm about the failure of our schools to educate certain segments of our population.

In order to challenge the idea that student backgrounds predetermine academic success, subsequent researchers (Brookover & Lezotte, 1978; Edmonds, 1979; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Reynolds, Hargreaves & Blackstone, 1980; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979) sought to prove that schools do matter for student achievement. This work primarily focused upon schools that provided academic success to all students, regardless of student background (Edmonds, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979). The goal was to identify specific characteristics that are associated with effective learning environments while continuing to use student achievement as a measure of school success. Collectively, this effort became known as the Effective Schools Research movement.

Edmonds (1979) utilized past research to create specific suggestions for effective schools within high poverty settings. His writing assigns an essential role to leadership and includes specific references to organizing and assigning resources, and setting the tone of a safe and orderly learning environment. Overall, Edmonds stated broadly that principal behaviors, policies and practices impacted school effectiveness. His suggestions stopped short of developing a leadership practice, yet the behaviors and leadership activities he espoused are now widely recognized as prerequisites for school success.

By the 1970's, specific characteristics of effective schools were beginning to emerge. Traits such as order, structure, and purposefulness were called out (Cuban, 1984), as well as teacher expectations, and appropriate instructional techniques (Edmonds, 1979; Rutter et al., 1979). Researchers concluded that strong administrative

leadership was indispensable in instructionally effective schools for the urban poor (Edmonds, 1979; Lezotte, Edmonds & Ratner, 1974). These early findings confirm that principals set the culture of high expectations and organized the school's resources to reflect those values (Edmonds, 1979). The role of the principal was described as a director of instruction, as an evaluator of the school's instructional program, and as accountable for school level improvement (Brookover & Lezotte, 1978).

Effective Schools Research identified characteristics of an effective school yet fell short of suggesting specific ways in which schools could develop the desirable characteristics that were identified. The characteristics of an effective school include instructional leadership, a clear and focused mission, a safe and orderly environment, a climate of high expectations, frequent monitoring of student progress, positive home-school relations, an opportunity to learn, and student time on task (Lezzote, 2001). Though Effective Schools research clearly established the principal as central to the functioning of a strong school and expanded the concept of the school to that of a dynamic social system made up of interrelated factors (Madden, Lawson & Sweet, 1976), the actions that serve to establish particular types of climate require a more specific examination of the role of the school leader.

Direct and Indirect Effects of Principals on Student Achievement

The realization that the role of the school leader is pivotal but poorly understood set the stage for more specific investigations about the impact of school leaders on student achievement. Researchers began to examine the role of school principals in order to describe behaviors associated with successful school leadership that transcend management issues. One immediate realization from the body of work seeking to

understand the direct and indirect effects of principals was that evidence about leadership effects on student learning can be confusing because of its complexity (Gurr-Mark, Drysdale-George & Mulford, 2010). This body of research began to deconstruct the complex nature of principal interactions, such as how they work through others, so that they might be observed, measured, and evaluated.

The idea of a direct effect versus indirect effect of school leadership is that the behaviors and the decisions of the principal can either be directly measured through observation or conversely, a principal may act through others (Beck & Murphy, 1998; Gurr-Mark et al., 2010; Hallinger & Murphey, 1985; Hallinger, Bickman & Davis, 1996; Heck, Marcoulides & Lang, 1991). Principals may interact directly with students inside or outside of the classroom in instructional or motivational ways. The direct effects of principal behaviors on student achievement are easier to observe, but may be infrequent and therefore show little correlation with student achievement (Hallinger et al., 1996; Nettles & Herrington, 2007; Ross & Gray, 2006). These results imply that while principals may directly impact student academic achievement, other more diverse and contextual impacts must be measured to understand the more complete impact of a principal's behavior.

The indirect effects of school leadership require the understanding of the complex and sometimes ambiguous role of the principal. In order to identify the variety of impacts that a principal might have, definitions of context embedded roles began to emerge. For example, one of the nebulous arenas by which the indirect effects of school leadership are played out is known as "school climate". Though shown to correlate with student achievement, "school climate" is an amalgam of difficult to observe components

that include systems of beliefs, values and undocumented norms (Gruenert, 2005). The emergent picture is that a principal's indirect effects on their learning institution form complex but important impacts on student achievement because of their interactions with teachers and their efforts in shaping and managing the educational environment (Gurr-Mark, 2010; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Hallinger et al., 1996; Witziers, Bosker & Kruger, 2003).

Taken together, the direct and indirect effects of principals on student achievement are potent (Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2003). A team of researchers from Vanderbilt (Hallinger, Bickman & Davis, 1996) explored the nature and context of principal effects on student achievement in order to determine how context embedded roles and behaviors were measureable or even detectable. Their schematic of direct versus indirect effects of principal behaviors is illustrated in Figure 3.

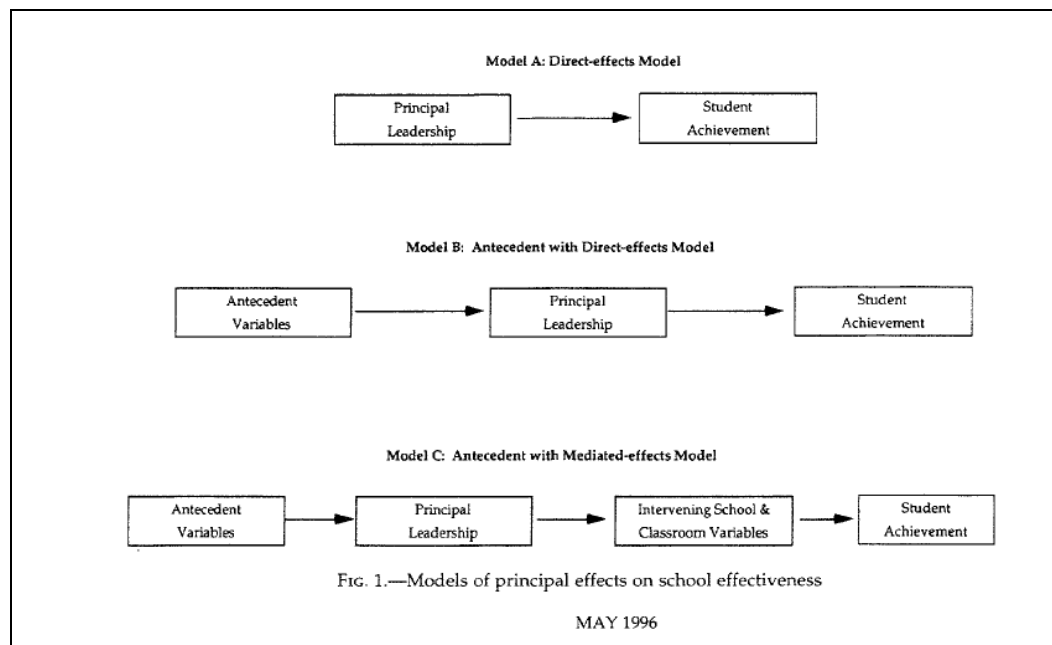


Figure 3. Direct versus indirect effects of principal upon student achievement.

The diagram illustrates the relationships as either acting directly upon, which would be a direct effect, or acting upon another intervening effect, which then acts upon student achievement. The antecedent effects were also noted and these relate to principal characteristics, which were also a part of the Hallinger et al. (1996) work. This research provides conceptual precursors of the idea of a leadership practice.

A more recent schema is provided by Seashore-Louis et al. (2010) below in Figure 4. This diagram depicts how the influence of the principal is indirect and embedded in the context of state and district policies, community, family and student demographics. The web of relationships is so complex that the authors attach the disclaimer that the relationships depicted in the figure are illustrative only because the figure cannot possibly show the many complex and interrelated relationships that actually exist (Seashore-Louis et al., 2010). This illustration distills direct versus indirect principal research in that it supports the argument for a more complex picture of principal effects that includes consideration of context.

Hallinger et al. (1996) acknowledged that no one management style or leadership style is appropriate for all schools, and that school leaders function within the particular constraints of their own school environments. Many leadership behaviors and traits of principals are positively related to student achievement, attitudes and social behavior (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991). Hoy et al. (1991) also acknowledge complexity in describing the effects of leadership but point to principal to teacher interactions, as well as subsequent teacher to teacher interactions, as being embedded in the culture of the school. Ross and Gray (2006) hypothesize that principals contribute to student

achievement through impacting teacher commitment and beliefs about collective capacity.

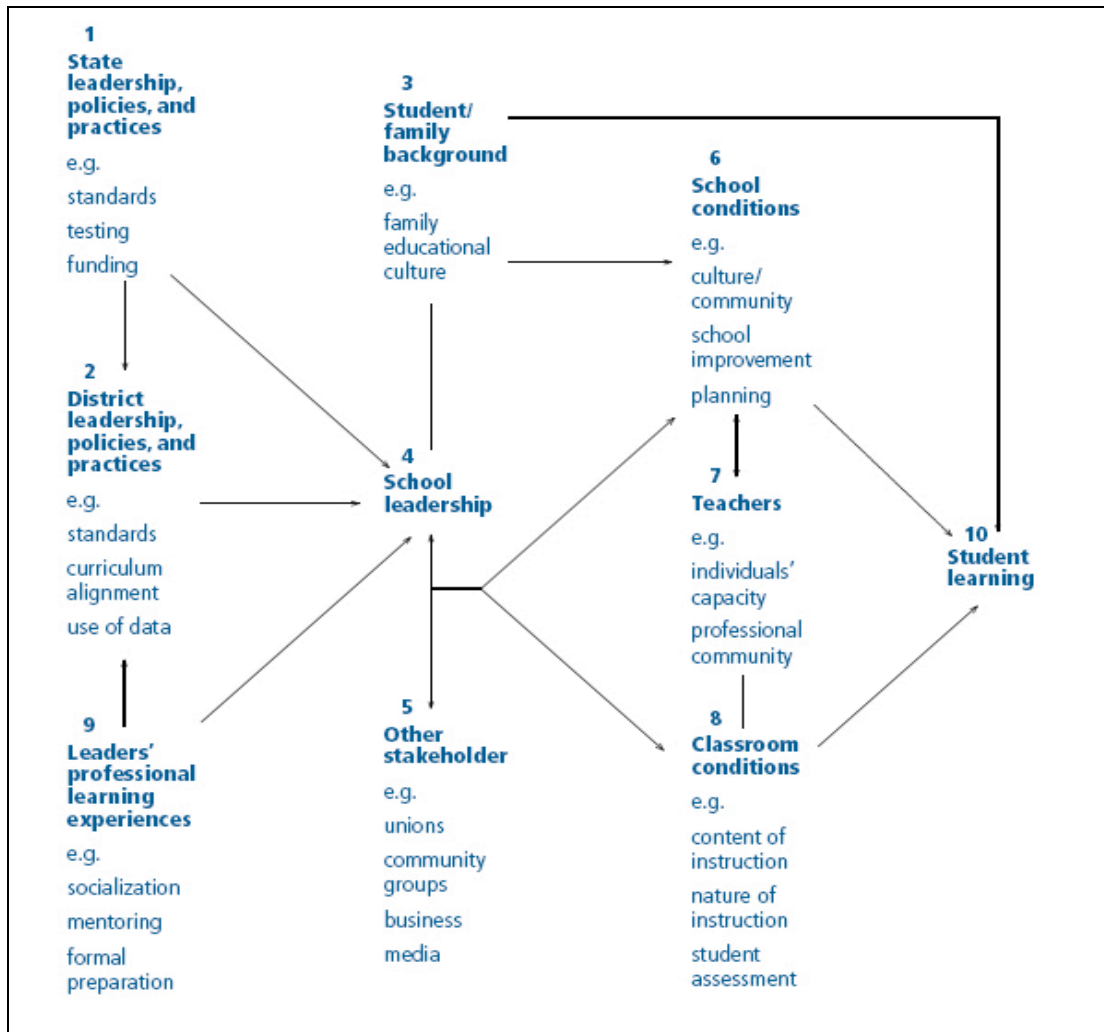


Figure 4. Linking leadership to learning.

In response to the possible criticism that indirect effects are too nuanced to create large impacts upon student achievement, Guenert (2005) reminds readers that principals under pressure of standardized exams tend to become more mechanistic, authoritarian and direct in their leadership. His study shows that it is the broader, more humane and difficult to establish belief systems and collaborative school cultures that are the source

of most of the leader's influence. The behaviors implicated in the indirect effects of leadership are not less important because they are complex, contextual, and usually involve the engagement of others who execute the actual work. Indeed, achieving results through others is the essence of leadership (Cotton, 2003). This line of work places school leadership squarely and appropriately within the context of the particular school.

Any confusion can be eliminated by understanding that leadership has an indirect effect on student achievement, but it has a direct effect on the instructional practices of teachers and on organizational structures, and these two components have a direct effect on student outcomes (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe & Meyerson, 2005; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Murphy, Elliott, Goldring & Porter, 2007). Through their leadership behaviors, principals act directly to affect student achievement and create the conditions conducive to effective teaching and learning environments. Together, the direct and indirect effects of leadership account for $\frac{1}{4}$ of total school effects (Waters et al., 2003). Importantly, leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most. Leadership effects are considerably greater in schools that are in more difficult circumstances. In these schools, the effects of leadership on student learning is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school.

Instructional Leadership

Once effective school research confirmed that schools do make a difference and that school leaders are at the helm of that effort, and once researchers observed that the direct and the indirect effects of leadership are strongly implied in positive school change, the next step in defining how to move schools towards success was to define

what kind of things the most effective leaders do that are important. This line of research focused on the idea of instructional leadership.

Historically, “principal” is a shortening of the term principal teacher, and is meant to announce or affirm the existence of teaching expertise as well as authority in the school building. The job of a principal has expanded well beyond the imagined historic role, as information and demands of the position have also burgeoned (Finkel, 2012). The job of principal now assumes titanic proportions and includes such diverse responsibilities as student discipline, building security and maintenance, school athletics, parental and community relations, evaluations of teachers, standardized test administration and data analysis, and host of mandated state and federal record keeping responsibilities including meeting adequate yearly progress, ensuring educational access for all student groups through such Individual Education Plans (IEPs), 504 plans, and Individual Literacy Plans, to name a few. It is appropriate nowadays to ask whether the position of the principal is a doable job (Copeland, 2001; Finkel, 2012; Fulmer, 2006).

Since the obligations of the principal are vast, instructional leadership research seeks to describe how successful principals prioritize and manifest their most important goal, that of keeping the focus on and supporting instruction (Finkel, 2012; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Smith, & Andrews, 1989). One focus of instructional leadership became identifying the most vital leadership behaviors out of the many behaviors that actually support instruction. Several researchers then provided prototypical structures for the behaviors of principals. The study of instructional leadership also begins to provide lists of cogent principal behaviors that are not prescribed, but are based in contextual responses.

Toward that end, Hallinger and Murphy (1985) highlight behaviors that support instructional leadership. They find that principals most effective in managing curriculum and instruction engage in the following behaviors.

1. Define the mission by framing and communicating school goals.
2. Manage the instructional program by supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating curriculum and monitoring student progress.
3. Promote school climate by protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, and enforcing academic standards, and recognizing and rewarding effective teaching and successful students.

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) also conducted a review and meta-analysis of leadership behaviors and how they affect student achievement. The following 21 Responsibilities of the School Leader are taken from Marzano's book *School Leadership that Works*. These responsibilities are the results of his study to determine effective practices for school leadership. The 21 responsibilities of the school leaders include affirmation, change agent, communication, contingent rewards, culture, discipline, flexibility, focus, ideals/beliefs, input, intellectual stimulation, involvement with curriculum, instruction and assessment, knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment, monitor and evaluate, optimizer, order, outreach, relationships, resources, situational awareness, and visibility (Marzano et al., 2005).

More recent leadership work continues to be informed by insights gleaned from instructional leadership literature. For example, Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond, (2004) incorporates the following instructional leadership tasks into his recent work on distributed leadership:

1. Constructing and selling an instructional vision;
2. Developing and managing a school culture conducive to conversations about the core technology of instruction by building norms of trust, collaboration, and academic press among staff;
3. Procuring and distributing resources, including materials, time, support, and compensation;
4. Supporting teacher growth and development, both individually and collectively;
5. Providing both summative and formative monitoring of instruction and innovation; and
6. Establishing a school climate in which disciplinary issues do not dominate instructional issues.

A survey of teachers in Canada found that the instructional leadership behaviors of school principals were significantly related to teachers' commitment, professional involvement, and innovativeness (Sheppard, 1996). Important principal behaviors include framing school goals, communicating school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring student progress, protecting instructional time, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, promoting professional development, providing incentives for learning (Sheppard, 1996).

Both historically and in its recent expression, instructional leadership has realized the effects of principal behaviors are contextually and relationship based, and may demand nuanced responses from leadership figures. Aside from providing prodigious lists of principal behaviors, instructional leadership research continued to analyze how

principals could possibly perform the expanding list of complex duties that the research implied. Administrator Jan Borelli (1997) offered a description of how to manage discipline issues in order to “turn administrators back into instructional leaders” (p. 69). In a school long beset with gang issues and low tests scores, her solution is contextually based and inclusive and empowering of stakeholders. Her insight included the fact that if everyone in the school is going to work to improve student discipline, then everyone must be empowered (Sheppard, 1996). In another recent review and synthesis effort to articulate what we know about instructional leadership, Blase and Blase (2005) focus on principals that are connected to teachers’ professional growth and performance. These researchers create their own model that includes three major themes that they call the TiGeR model (Blase & Blase, 2005, p. 18). The model includes a matrix of building a desirable culture of collaboration, equality and lifelong study of teaching through talk, growth and reflection. Here is a welcome acknowledgement that the job of leadership is best shared; although the authors do not appear to believe that anyone other than teachers can share it.

Another researcher, De Bevoise (1984), interprets the concept of instructional leadership to be actions that the principal delegates to others. These actions include setting academic goals, managing resources, creating the school culture, and managing teacher professional development. Common leadership functions that must be fulfilled include monitoring performance, rewarding good work, providing staff development. Principals or other building leaders carry out these functions. It follows that delegation is required because teacher expertise has grown so that in any school, some teachers should

know far more about pedagogy, curriculum, and student learning for their subject area than the principal.

According to Smith and Andrews (1989), the logical next investigation became how to accomplish this feat since it is impossible for the principal to be an expert in every subject area. The main lesson of instructional leadership was that the leadership must be accomplished through a community of professionals who are invested in the same values and vision of the school. It is the principal's job to provide a moral center, enlist and encourage those professionals and to put into place the vision of the school (Finkel, 2012).

Roland Barth's (1990) notion of collegiality described in *Improving Schools from Within* provides a model. Barth says that if students are to grow and learn, their teachers must grow and learn, too. He discusses four aspects of collegiality: teachers talking together about students, teachers developing curriculum together, teachers observing one another teach, and teachers teaching one another. In another publication, Barth (2006) asserts that the nature of the relationships among the adults within a school has a greater influence upon student accomplishment than any other measured value. It becomes clear that a central insight of instructional leadership is that teachers and administrators must work together to shape a solution for a particular school issue.

Today's teachers don't necessarily look for answers from an instructional leader. But they need to know that their leader understands and appreciates their work and recognizes their challenges and frustrations. Teachers need to see their principals as partners in education, learning with and from them (Finkel, (2012). These authors have developed an apprenticeship model for instructional leaders is called "practice embedded

work” which is learning that relates directly to the problems experienced within the school of practice. That is, since the issues of the school are unique and instructional leadership requires that solutions are considered contextually, they recommend that leadership training occur at the school. Another benefit of this practice is that it formalizes the role of the school principal as a continuous learner, one who is steeped in the culture of learning in the school. The centrality of professional development so that teachers, administrators and students are all focused upon the same thing.

Consistent with literature on leadership practice and theory, principal behaviors are not personality driven, but rely on the importance of underlying themes and values that hold a system together (De Bevoise, 1984; Smith & Andrews, 1989). Also, these works concluded that principal personal characteristics did not apply out of context of the school. DeBevoise (1984) concluded that the most important feature of the present research was the descriptions of the principals and their own self assessments of how they operate within the idiosyncratic environments of their schools. DeBevoise (1984) realized that the synthesis of past studies reinforced how principals act in context and within a broader school community than is represented by the school building itself. Principals cannot exercise instructional leadership in a vacuum. They need support from teachers, students, parents, and the community. Principal-teacher relationships are emphasized (Smith & Andrews, 1989), and so principals must build a structure of relationships in the school building.

From schools make a difference, to school leaders make a difference, to instructional leaders make a difference, these three precursors of a leadership practice construct (effective schools research, direct and indirect effects of principals on student

achievement, and instructional leadership) trace the emergence and acceptance of the central role of the principal in the curricular and instructional functions of the school related to student achievement.

Early References to Leadership Practices

The following sections describe three key early references on the way to defining a leadership practice construct. The first of these is the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The second section provides a description of the Readiness Model from the High Performance–High Poverty (HP-HP) literature. The third section is a review of the ideas related to distributed leadership.

Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI)

By reviewing 25 years of research on excellent models of leadership behaviors, Kouzes and Posner (2007) identified five leadership practices of exemplary leadership. These five practices include, (a) model the way, (b) inspire a shared vision, (c) challenge the process, (d) enabling others to act, and (e) encourage the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2000). The Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI), also a product of Kouzes and Posner, is a well-known assessment of leadership behaviors that can be considered a 360-degree survey because the test subject and others in the work relationship with the subject complete the survey. The LPI is based on the research reported in the book *The Leadership Challenge: How to Keep Getting Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations* (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). This well-investigated tool (Posner & Kouzes, 1993; Zagorsek, Stough & Jaklic, 2006) has been shown to possess good validity, precision and reliability for middle level leadership competence levels. The test can be used as a development tool by organizations or can be used in a self-reflection process.

The LPI informs educational assessments that evaluate the effective leadership practices of building level school leaders although it is not specifically designed for the particular issues of school leadership. Also, it provides baseline information about what constitutes a leadership practice. The work of Kouzes and Posner (2002) provides evidence that “the five practices of exemplary leaders do make a difference at the personal, interpersonal, small group, and organizational level” (p.18), and leads us on to the next section contributing to the development of leadership practice and the concept of distributed leadership.

High Poverty–High Performance (HP-HP) Research

In analyzing national data about achievement and urban schools that serve high poverty students, Calkins, Genther, Belfore, and Lash (2007) concede the strong and discouraging correlation between poverty and chronic under-performance for schools. It is no wonder, as high concentrations of school poverty are correlated with high teacher turnover, a student body facing issues with health care, nutrition, violence and unstable home environments, student transience, truancy and disciplinary problems (Orfield & Lee, 2005; Rumberger & Palardy, 2005). This pattern dominates achievement data for every state, and schools that fail year after year are almost always linked to poverty indicators (Calkins et al., 2007). However, because school performance varies at every income level, exceptions to this correlation do occur, so researchers set out to define how some high poverty schools achieved good results.

The resulting model that describes how high-performing, high-poverty (HPHP) schools is called the Readiness Model (Calkins et al., 2007) where education depends entirely on the readiness of the system to teach, learn and act effectively. Halle, Zaff,

Calkins, and Geyelin (2000) describe this framework as an ecological framework since it is informed entirely by the context of the learner and school. Whereas the readiness of the family and child are traditionally considered in readiness models, this model extends to the readiness of schools (Kagan, Moore & Bradekamp, 1995).

Calkins, Genther, Belfore, and Lash (2007) also provide research findings that share how a small number of schools are successfully serving high-poverty student populations which are similar to the lowest performing schools in the country. These findings show that these HP-HP schools exhibit three characteristics. These researchers have used these three characteristics and related elements in their Readiness Model for School Turnaround (see Figure 5).

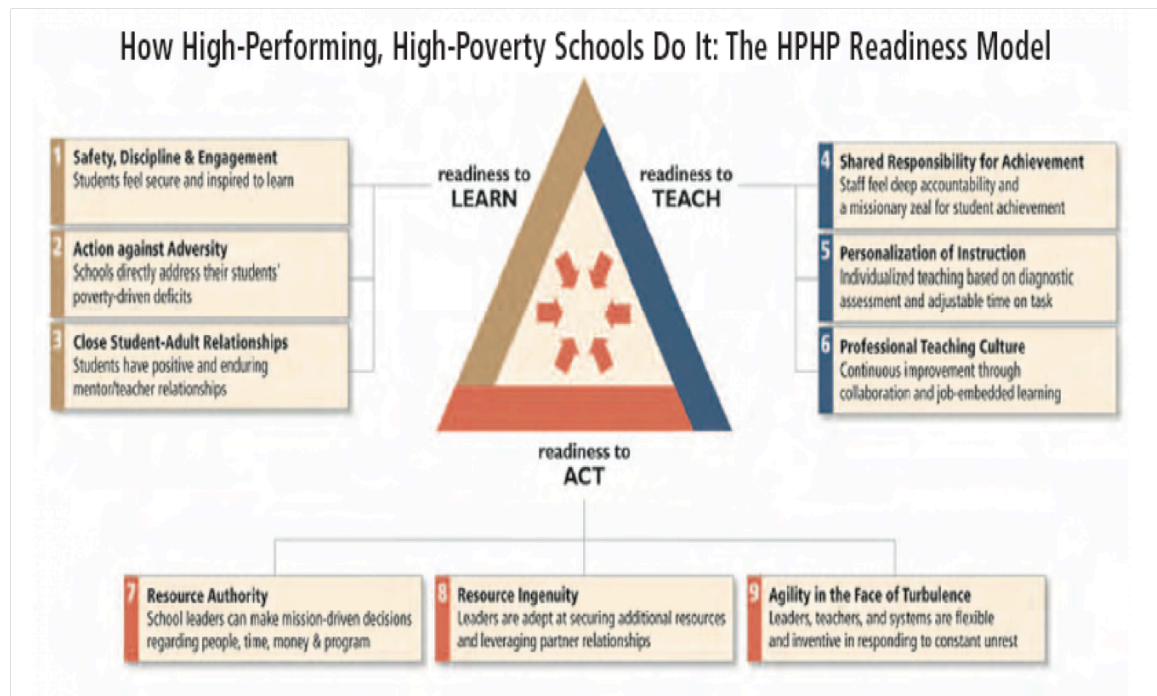


Figure 5. The readiness model for school turnaround efforts.

The implications from this work are that in order for schools to be successful in school turnaround or improvement work, they need to assess their readiness for change in three key areas: (a) readiness to learn, (b) readiness to teach, and (c) readiness to act. In

the first key area, readiness to learn, three school characteristics are deemed necessary for improvement are: (a) safety, discipline, and student engagement occurs when students feel secure and inspired to learn, (b) schools take action against adversity and directly address their student's poverty-driven deficits, and (c) in order for students to have positive and enduring mentor/teacher relationships, closer student-adult relationships have to be encouraged and nurtured. For the second area, *readiness to teach*, the following characteristics must be present: (a) if staff feel a deep accountability and missionary zeal for student achievement, then a shared responsibility for student achievement will be present in that school, (b) when teachers are able to personalize instruction by basing that instruction on both diagnostic assessment and adjusting time on task for learning experiences, and (c) a pervasive professional teaching culture where the practice of continuous improvement occurs through collaboration in job-embedded learning. For the third key area, *readiness to act*, speaks to an organization's capacity to act in these three areas: (a) resource authority – school leaders can make mission-driving decisions regarding people, time, money, and programs, (b) resource ingenuity – leaders are adept at securing additional resources and leveraging partner relationships, and (c) agility in the face of constant unrest or turbulence.

This particular body of work on turnaround schools in general and this particular readiness model described and illustrated above was selected for inclusion in this literature review for two reasons. The first is that it is a newer and more advanced version of the school effectiveness research, but much more nuanced. The second is that it provides and supports the search in this study for an applicable definition of the construct

of a leadership practice. Added to this literature review, the complex nature of context in which a school leader must work becomes clearer.

Distributed Leadership Practices

Distributed Leadership is defined by Spillane (2005) as a theoretical framework that is concerned with what happens between leaders and followers. As a framework, it can be utilized in situations that represent both working together towards a goal or working toward opposing ends. That is, it is not meant to be a recipe for successful leadership nor a checklist of behaviors (2006), but rather a point of view from which to analyze leadership. Distributed leadership is orientated towards a property that emerges from a group of interacting individuals. It is the set of concerted interactions between a network of individuals that leads to a goal (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001, 2004). A metaphor Spillane uses is that of comparing distributed leadership to a dance, specifically, the Texas two-step. The dance is not the music alone, nor is it one or another of the persons involved; the dance is the thing that is happening between the music and the two persons. From a distributed leadership perspective, one must observe the context as well as the individuals engaged in a conjoined effort in order to understand how the effect becomes more than just an additive sum of disparate actions by autonomous individuals.

Spillane emphasizes two aspects of distributed leadership, the “leader plus” aspect and the “practice aspect”. The leader plus aspect emphasizes the fact that leadership is not bounded by an institutionally defined leader (2006). In a school setting, many individuals may contribute their expertise to a leadership effort in any situation. The practice aspect of leadership emphasizes that leadership exists as a dynamic between

people as they pool their resources to achieve a mutually held goal, so that Spillane and Diamond (2007) claim it insufficient to study leadership by observing the leader. From a distributed perspective, the focus must be on contextualized interactions with others.

A distributed perspective does not diminish the role of the school principal as a leader; rather the distributed perspective seeks to analyze how leadership is distributed across the work of multiple leaders. Spillane and Diamond (2007) focus on how the school staff interacts in order to fulfill the many responsibilities of managing and leading a school. The authors use the term co-leading to describe the common phenomena of leadership activities carried out across several categories of persons rather than a division of labor that is based upon formally designated positions. Three types of leadership distribution are described. Collaborated distribution defines the work of multiple leaders who work together and actually co-perform the same task at the same place and time. Collective distribution refers to multiple leaders working separately but interdependently. Coordinated distribution is a leadership involved when leadership must be performed in a certain sequence.

Within distributed leadership, followers are people who may not have formal leadership designations, but who nonetheless, fulfill leadership responsibilities. In such a scenario, followers may choose to contribute to leadership practice as they either interact with others giving and receiving advice and sharing strategies, or carry out the leadership activities of a formally designated administrator (Spillane and Halverson, 2007). The final requisite element of a distributed leadership practice is the situation, or context, of the work. Especially in schools, circumstances define the work so completely, that a

discussion about leadership must include the many aspects of context. For example, the focus of school leadership is greatly impacted by the context of school demographics.

Within this triad of leaders, followers, and situation, the distributed leadership framework provides a model with an emphasis upon dynamic interactions between individuals rather than a parceling or partitioning of duties. The notion of leadership in this framework transcends an individual's characteristics and even their place in the formal hierarchy of a school building. Instead, distributed leadership assigns central importance to school leaders and their followers that fluidly adapt to the contexts of situations and the demands of the task at hand. Distributed leadership practice may be thought of as both "a conceptual and analytic framework for studying leadership interaction" (Harris, 2010, p. 4) as it promotes both a fuller conception of leadership in schools and provides a tool for diagnosing the essence of leadership practice, that is, the study of leaders in action.

Conceptual Frameworks Supporting a Leadership Practice

In order to move beyond the list making that has been encountered in past descriptions of leadership of the past (Fullan, 2007), one of the goals of this literature review is to construct a conceptual framework through which the behaviors of the principal may be interpreted. Towards this goal, the framework supports recording principal behaviors imbued with context and intent in order to provide meaning and to assist with interpretation. The conceptual frameworks that guide this study are based upon recent work that emphasizes both what is taking place within the school and how the school leadership initiates and sustains what is happening in the school (Bryk et al., 2010; Goldring et al. 2009; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). These recent

conceptualizations of leadership consider elements that include the school leader and their intentional engagement of others within the particular context of the school toward reaching articulated goals. The work that follows draws upon the notion of a leadership practice from distributed leadership developed by Spillane et al. (2004) and the VAL-ED Matrix (Goldring et al., 2009), the Essential Supports and Indicators framework (Bryk et al., 2010).

Distributed Leadership Practices

Spillane et al. (2004) argue that a study grounded in a conceptual framework has more potential to provide insight into leadership innovation and responses to situation and context than a study of leadership procedures, roles or personalities. They then provide the distributed leadership conceptual framework, which includes three dimensions; those of leaders, followers and a particular situation that make up the components of a leadership practice (see Figure 6).

This trinity of leaders, followers, and their situations is cohesive; with each element a prerequisite for a leadership practice rather than existing as part of a whole. Spillane (2004) differentiates between the identification and analysis of tasks and the enactment of those tasks, centering the study of school leadership on the how and why of the leadership activity. Spillane's contention is that a leader's thinking, behavior and situation need to be considered together in order to understand the how and why of leadership behaviors. He considers situation to be the appropriate unit of analysis for studying practice since sense is completely informed by the context in which cognition takes place. Therefore, the distributed perspective of a leadership practice model includes in situ interactions of leaders and their followers.

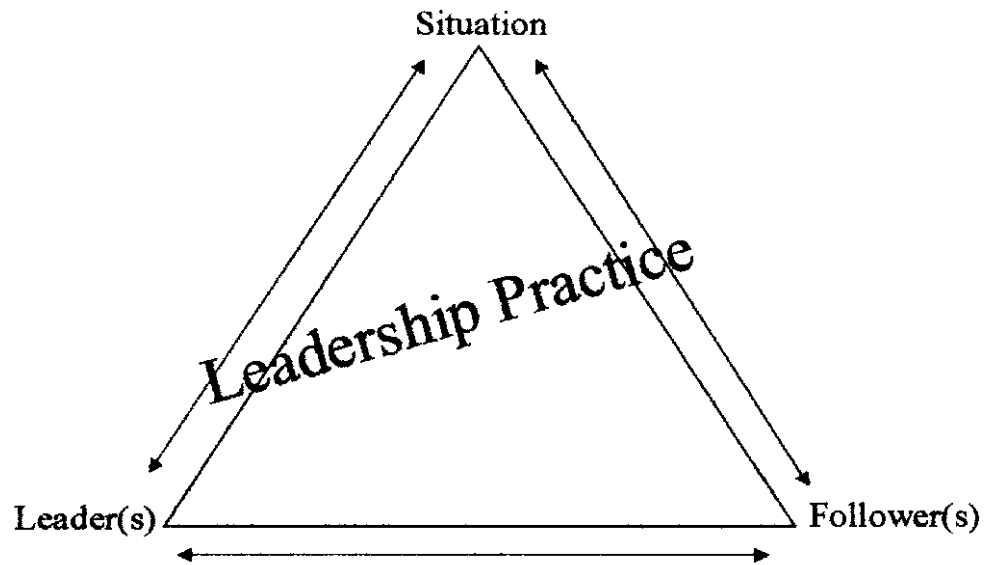


Figure 6. Constituting elements of a leadership practice (Spillane et al., 2004) and others within the particular context of the school while engaged in a particular task.

For example, the distributed leadership framework might be used to evaluate how a school serves its ELA students in the subject area of mathematics. The context of observation is important since leader/teacher/student interactions are undoubtedly shaped by the students' English language experience level and their previously mastered math skills. In this case, the emphasis on the questions of *why* and *how* a leadership practice looks like it does provide a level of meaning that is not available through a listing of principal behaviors. An example of how planning a rigorous mathematics curriculum would be described within the Spillane et al. (2004) framework includes the interactions between the principal and other teacher leaders within the mathematics department. The school leader acts within the perceived needs of the particular setting and might, for example, prepare existing teachers for the new set of classes via professional learning. If the context of the school is such that teachers do not realize the need for a change in the mathematics curriculum, then prerequisite work might include either a review of cogent data with teachers, or hiring new, differently informed instructors. The palette of

leadership practice is dependent upon the interaction between the leader and the followers in the context of the situation for any of focal points of the observation of that work such as the core components, key processes, and essential supports and indicators explained by the following frameworks.

VAL-ED Matrix

The VAL-ED Matrix (shown previously in Figure 1 in Chapter One, p. 8) is composed of six core components and six key processes identified from research on learner-centered leadership (Goldring et al., 2009). The matrix illustrates 36 areas that are formed by the intersection of these components and processes that become the actual focal points of the leadership practice (leaders, followers, and the situation). These six core components that make up this matrix are linked to teachers' opportunities to improve their instruction and student learning and the processes through which the school leaders leverage these core components. The six core components of leadership follow with brief explanations:

1. High Standards for Student Learning – This component concerns the principal's assurance that the school culture is defined by a rigorous academic vision and that individuals, curricular teams, and the entire school understands the goal of academic achievement.
2. Rigorous Curriculum – This aspect of the matrix refers to the rigor of the curriculum that is available to students. It requires that subject area instructors have clear and rigorous curricular goals for each individual student, and that challenging academic content is available to each student.

3. Quality Instruction – this component of the VAL-ED measurement matrix concerns the quality of the pedagogy provided by teachers in the school. A high quality pedagogical experience for students includes clear goals, masterful use of instructional materials, timely and meaningful feedback and assessment.
4. Culture of Learning & Professional Behavior – For students, a positive school culture may be manifested by a supportive, responsive and safe environment that encourages students to succeed academically. For teachers, a positive school culture is also focused upon student success and improved professional practice rather than creating pleasant social experiences.
5. Connections to External Communities – This element of the matrix refers to the relationships that schools develop with community and family members and other stakeholders beyond the student. External relationships have value beyond advertisement, and extend to local political, business, and religious leaders.
6. Performance Accountability – Accountability encompasses feedback mechanisms to staff about student performance including data driven efforts to execute specific changes and state mandated testing. Accountability systems are the feedback loop by which schools measure their own progress towards their goal of improvement.

These core component areas are the measured focal points for the leadership practices of principals aimed at achieving specific school goals.

Similarly, the six key-processes of the VAL-ED matrix represent the processes by which each of the core components, or focal points for principal's leadership practices, is executed. Planning, implementing, supporting, advocacy, communicating, and

monitoring are necessary processes for accomplishment of all core components. The VAL-ED matrix identifies and measures each of these processes as they are described in relationship to core components. Each of these key processes is described below:

7. Planning – Effective leaders plan in order to predict needed resources such as people, time and money. Planning is also required in order to articulate what and how a program is to be executed.
8. Implementing – Implementation is the execution of a task. It involves the step subsequent to planning, when a leader actually puts into practice whatever has become the focus of work.
9. Supporting – Support is ensuring that the key components that enable the success of a project are present. Leaders express personal interest in the activities of staff and ensure that necessary resources exist so that staff can enjoy success. This process is closely aligned with transformational leadership.
10. Advocacy – This column in the VAL-ED matrix contains leaders' behaviors of advocacy for students as well as teachers. Principals will advocate for students outside of the school setting and after students leave school. Advocacy involves negotiations with parents, community and policy makers on behalf of students to ensure equitable opportunities within and without the school walls.
11. Communicating – Through clear and constant communication with all stakeholders of schools, leaders articulate goals and expectations and celebrate school successes. Communication is central to all core components of the matrix. For example, accountability only has meaning once it is communicated to students, teachers, parents and community members.

12. Monitoring – Monitoring is the feedback loop by which the goals of the school are measured and evaluated. Monitoring is central for the accountability of students’ achievements, teacher growth via professional development, and evaluating the school culture.

The VAL-ED matrix was selected for use in this study for three purposes. First, it provides a description of evidence based and validated leadership behaviors by which the principal will be measured. Second, it allows the researcher to shape the interview process around the most cogent behaviors found in the VAL-ED survey. Third, the framework provides support for the development of the construct of a leadership practice—a response to the first research question of this study.

An example of how the VAL-ED matrix might be used to describe the content focus of a leadership practice (leaders, followers, situations) that supports mathematics achievement for students in the school of interest might include how the principal plans for, implements and supports a rigorous mathematics curriculum. One scenario that includes the planning and implementing function that supports the core components of rigorous curriculum is one wherein the school principal decides to eradicate the remedial track from the mathematics class hierarchy. The principal then needs to plan how to add specific courses to the overall class schedule. New courses might include higher-level mathematics as well as skills based classes or extra tutoring for students who need more support in attaining these goals. In this case, implementation of the rigorous mathematics curriculum might include ensuring that existing staff received appropriate training for the higher level mathematics courses or that new, highly qualified staff are hired, and that the schedule is arranged to support the classes.

Essential Supports and Indicators

The third conceptual framework used in this study is the Essential Supports and Indicators (ES-I) framework of Bryk et al. (2010). This framework is drawn from research establishing leadership as the driver for school transformation and is based on a decade of research on Chicago schools that enjoyed academic success in spite of existing within high-poverty and high-need communities. This conceptual framework depicts how leadership as the driver of change acts upon the essential supports and indicators for school improvement. A schema of this framework is shown previously in Figure 2 in Chapter One (p. 11).

Early on in the reform effort targeting Chicago's low performing, poor, urban schools, researchers found the quality of the principal's leadership to be the critical factor in determining whether the school is able to create and maintain an academic turnaround (Seabring & Bryk, 2000). Specific strategies, such as attacking and solving highly visible problems, were called out, but these eventually led to a coherent message about leadership and community trust, focus on the instructional core, and inclusive/facilitative style leadership. The work from this era shows that these leadership elements are firmly situated in what the Chicago researchers call Social Trust, which could be described as how students, faculty, leaders, family members and the larger community all interact to achieve one goal.

Bryk et al. (2010, p. 49) developed a conceptual framework from five essential supports that affect student achievement and positive school change. They include the following: (a) leadership as the driver for change, (b) professional capacity, (c) the school learning climate, (d) parent, school, community ties/community relations, and (e)

instructional guidance. These five supports are called essential because each must be present for the others to function.

In addition to the five essential supports, those researchers (Bryk et al., 2010) noted fourteen indicators that make up each of the five essential supports. These indicators are: (a) school leadership, (b) parent involvement, (c) teacher ties to community, (d) professional community, (e) work orientation, (f) teacher background, (g) change in human resources, (h) frequency of professional development (i) quality of professional development (j) academic support and press, (k) safety & order, (l) curriculum alignment, (m) applications emphasis, and (n) basic skills emphasis.

The Bryk et al. (2010) framework of essential supports and indicators could be used to describe a leadership practice that supports mathematics achievement for students in schools of interest similar to the manner in which the VAL-ED matrix is used. For example, how the principal plans for, implements and supports a rigorous mathematics curriculum aligns with the Bryk et al. (2010) essential support called instructional guidance. Using the example of how a school leader would plan for a rigorous mathematics curriculum engages what Bryk et al. (2010) calls instruction leadership which is manifest when the principal sets high standards and exercises leadership for instructional reform.

Since the Bryk et al. (2010) framework explicitly investigates the fourteen indicators and essential supports implicated in substantially improved student academic achievement, an example can be extracted directly from the research. Bryk et al. (2010) investigated the separate fourteen organizational indicators of school success as well as the strength or weakness of combined indicators and the most potent combinations may

be chosen as models for change in like situations. For example, parent involvement, work orientation of the staff, the quality of professional development, curriculum alignment and applications emphasis of the curriculum were all found to be strongly associated with improving mathematics academic productivity (Bryk et al. (2010). Further, certain combinations of these indicators worked more strongly in tandem than individually. The following combinations were especially powerful in predicting improvement in academic mathematics – and conversely, their absence strongly predicted stagnation in this mathematics achievement:

1. A strong faculty work orientation combined with high quality professional development.
2. Quality professional development combined with a strong report on school-based professional community.
3. Strong faculty work orientation combined with curriculum alignment.
4. Strong professional community and curriculum alignment.

Conversely, disabling combinations were detected, the two most profound being (a) a weak professional environment in combination with weak curriculum alignment, and (b) poor curricular alignment coupled with a weak applications focus. Since all of these indicators are impacted by school leadership, and because the Bryk et al. (2010) framework considers leadership to be a key and necessary ingredient for creating overall school success, this framework provides specific areas of focus that when investigating the relationship between mathematics achievement in successful schools serving ELA learners in the Denver metro area.

Definition of Leadership Practice

This study is informed by the previously described theoretical constructs of leadership practice with further explication provided by the frameworks of the Distributed Leadership model (Spillane et al., 2004), the VAL-ED Matrix (Goldring, 2009) and the ES-I framework of Bryk et al. (2010). The validated research of Bryk et al. (2010) and the VAL-ED matrix describe core components, key processes, and essential supports and indicators that taken together, with the notions of leaders, followers, and specific contextual situations (Spillane et al., 2010) are used to define a leadership practice. Taken together, three frameworks provide a theoretical base and strong evidence-based frameworks that focus on the work of learner-centered leadership and the role of leaders as drivers of school improvement. The following discussion details how these conceptual frameworks are both complimentary and mutually supportive, and how they are used here to present a more complete definition of leadership practice.

The definition of leadership practice applied in this study draws from the theory of Spillane by basing its observations and measurement efforts directly and purposefully within a specific context. For this study, the subjects are successful school principals serving a population of high interest, that of ELA learners in high poverty urban schools. This research shares the goal of Spillane et al. (2004) in recording leadership practices that occur between shared leaders and followers in a specific context. Distributed leadership is so rooted in the interactions between the leaders and followers, that followers actually become part of the triad of necessary leadership elements rather than passive recipients of leadership. That is, leadership practice is not the isolated actions of principals, but the interactions of people within the school towards a common goal. In

this way, distributed leadership accommodates the 360° measurement tactic employed by the VAL-ED matrix. Other compatible elements of distributed leadership and VAL-ED include the consideration of multiple leaders and their followers giving specific evidence of leadership interactions. Spillane describes how some of the key processes used in VAL-ED may call for more or less shared leadership. For example, Spillane discusses how monitoring (a VAL-ED key process) teacher instruction (a VAL-ED core component) would compare to implementing (a VAL-ED key process) a culture of learning and professional behavior (a VAL-ED core component). In this way, Distributed Leadership both confirms and adds to the other theoretical frameworks for this study.

With the same emphasis on interactions as distributed leadership, the work of Bryk et al. (2010) is likewise steeped in context, defining the work of the leader to be inextricable from any element of what happens in a successful school. This emphasis provides a theoretical bridge between the main ideas of the research done in urban Chicago schools with distributed leadership. The work of Bryk et al. (2010) is also highly compatible to the Val-Ed 360° measurement tool. In fact, for this study, each of the Essential Support and Indicators of the Bryk et al. (2010) work has been aligned with Val-Ed core components and key processes via coding that can be found in Appendix E of this manuscript.

Multiple international studies (Harris, 2002, Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008) confirm the universality of the implications of the Bryk et al. (2010) work. A unifying theme of this research supports the notion of the school leader as a key element in change, and a people centered approach to problem solving that includes attention to the

particular circumstances and context of the school, articulation and fidelity to the core values of the school, and creating a people oriented school learning climate. Reviews of international literature confirm some of the basic tenets of Bryk et al. (2010):

1. School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning.
2. The ways in which leaders apply these basic leadership practices is context responsive.
3. School leaders develop professional capacity to support student learning.
4. School leadership engages others to execute their goals. (Leithwood et al., 2008)

The meticulously researched practices of the Chicago consortium provide highly detailed explanations of leadership practices and allow a highly focused consideration of systems and subsystems affecting school change. For example, the present study gleans information about essential supports from the Bryk et al. (2010) study that substantially improve academic improvement in mathematics. This information is then integrated into the narrative inquiry interview protocol questions for the principal and can also be linked to the core components and processes measured by the VAL-ED instrument. In this way, the three theoretical frameworks of leadership both support and complement each other.

This present work both creates a network of alignment between these three state-of-the-art theoretical frameworks and adds to them. An illustration of how these theoretical frameworks are integrated for this study follows below in Figure 7.

The definition of leadership practice used here invokes the validated focus upon what is happening between leaders in the context of particular school settings, but

Defining A Leadership Practice

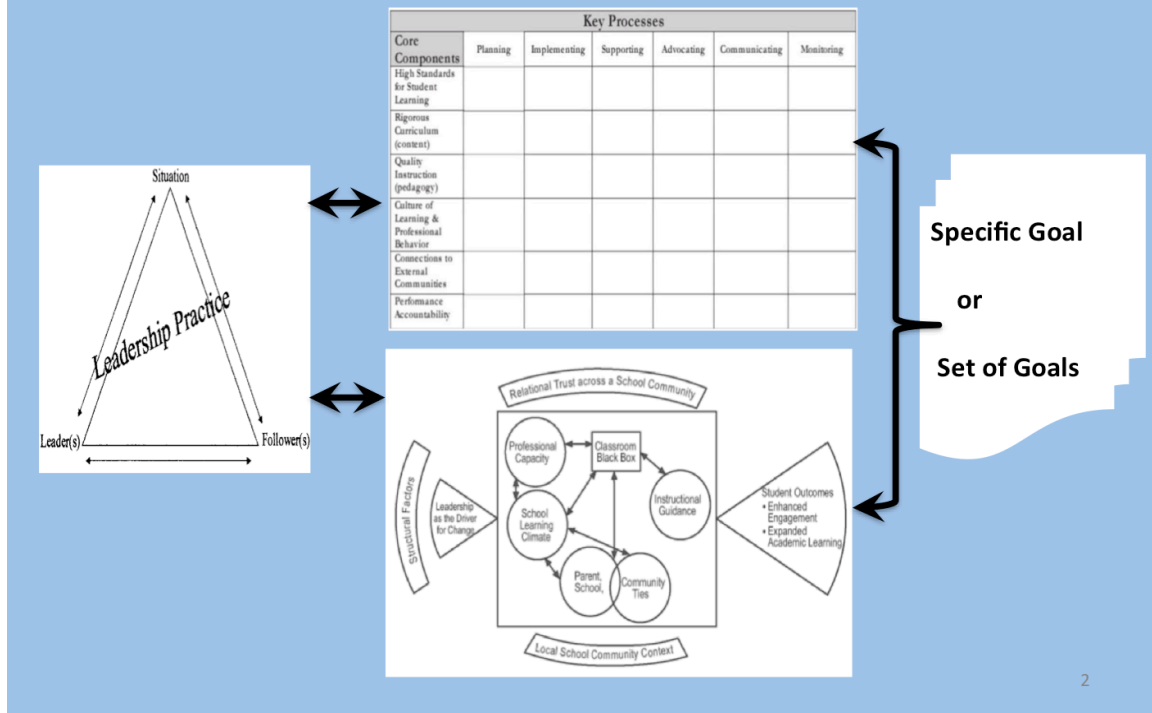


Figure 7. Utilizing three theoretical frameworks to define leadership practice for this study (Bryk et al., 2010, Goldring et al., 2009, Spillane et al., 2004).

includes an inquiry about goal driven intent. That is, the definition of a leadership practice for this study includes the intentional engagement of followers and co-leaders in the specific context of the school (focus on particular work efforts) with specific, well articulated goals. The intent of this research is to document a rich case study of the leadership practices currently in place in these successful schools serving ELA-learners. The three theoretical frameworks used to achieve these descriptions offer a validated measurement, richly detailed descriptions of how previously measured specific leadership practices impact schools, and an insistence understanding both the particular context and the goal of the leadership practice.

Summary

The preceding sections of this chapter reviewed the leadership literature and argued for the development of the of a leadership practice construct—from relatively simple lists of behaviors to the more complex, context embedded theoretical frameworks. Four major sections of leadership literature were reviewed. The first section was the literature on what we know about ELA-learners in the area of mathematics achievement. The second period reviewed contained early precursors of the leadership practice construct: effective schools, direct and indirect effects of principal leadership on student achievement, and instructional leadership. The third period focused on early references to the leadership practice construct: the LPI, the readiness model drawn from HP-HP literature, and the promising nature of distributed leadership. The fourth period in this chapter furthered the definition of a leadership practice by using the two conceptual frameworks used in this study as the context or conceptual elements of that leadership practice. The next chapter will outline the research procedures that will be used to identify the specific and particularized leadership practices currently being used by the principal who leads the successful school serving ELA-learners with regards to mathematics achievement.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the details of the methodology used in this study to answer the research questions. The first section outlines the methods used in this research: case study, and narrative inquiry. The second section focus on research design elements: site selection, subjects, unit of analysis, and the seven stages of this research study. The third section described the three research instruments used in this study: VAL-ED Survey, Leadership Practices Interview Protocol, and the Narrative Interview Protocol. The following section outlines data collection strategies used with each instrument. Next, data analysis procedures are presented. Data coding inventory development will be explained in the next section. This chapter ends with a description of how data were triangulated and checking procedures used for ensuring trustworthiness of data in this study.

Methods

This section addresses two methods used in this study. The first is case study methodology. The second method is narrative inquiry.

Case Study

The basic overall design of this study is a staged, qualitative-quantitative case study and is part of a larger, thematic dissertation group study with an aim to understand leadership practices as they apply to successful urban schools serving ELA students. As such, the method of a case study utilizing a non-probability sampling method is appropriate (Merriam, 2009). Also as defined by Merriam (2009), the school and the principal that are the object of this research may be considered a bounded system since

we have defined the school via specific, highly relevant criteria. Selection criteria have been chosen with the purpose of learning as much as possible from a particular setting; that of the successful school serving students that are high poverty and ELA learners.

The goal is to provide a particular and contextualized description for a setting that is of high interest in education. Since the conceptual framework of this research is founded upon research that emphasizes context for understanding of leadership practices (Bryk et al., 2010; Spillane, 2006), the use of the case study becomes compulsory. The Leadership Practices Interview Protocol (see Appendix B) and the Narrative Inquiry Interview Protocol (see Appendix C) are used in this study to elicit reflective yet directed responses that lead to illumination of how a school leader experience their position and their leadership practice. The intent is to identify known leadership practices indicating a highly proficient leader, but within the context of the school and its particular issues. The possibility also exists for uncovering new leadership practices via the open ended format of the narrative inquiry.

Narrative Inquiry

Webster and Mertova (2007) report that collecting stories about experience has not often been considered an inquiry method, but rather is thought of as a way to collect data. However, *narrative inquiry* is set in human experience and human stories and therefore is well suited to addressing the complexities and subtleties of teaching, learning and leading. Bell (2002) also reports that the process of narrative inquiry is based on the assumption that human beings make sense out of their life experiences by telling stories. Early proponents of narrative inquiry (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Gough, 1991; Grumet, 1981) argue that narrative inquiry is an important and compelling methodology

best suited to uncover what might have otherwise been invisible to us through the use of story-telling methodologies. Webster and Mertova (2007) confirm how narrative inquiry is becoming an invaluable method, particularly in educational research.

Additionally, Reissman (2008) cautions that narrative inquiry methodological perspectives “have elusive, contested, and indeterminate borders” (p. 183). The validity or “trustworthiness” of narrative inquiry methodology should be “assessed from within the situated perspectives and traditions that frame it” (p. 185). In this study that situated context is a school, it’s cultural and academic contexts, and the specific and particularized leadership practices that the principal has put into place over a period of at least 3 or more years. For these reasons narrative inquiry was selected for use in this study.

Research Design Elements

In the sections below, four research design elements are presented. The first describes how the research site was selected. The second talks about the research subjects. The third names the unit of analysis for this study. The final section provides an overview of the stages of this study.

Site Selection

One school will be identified from the list of successful schools serving ELA learners in DPS. The principal will be invited to participate in this study. The particular criteria used to choose the schools in this study follow; the school has at least 40% ELA learner enrollment with at least 100 English language learners enrolled, at least 50% of students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, has a School Performance Framework Rating of 45% (CDE, 2012) or greater for middle and high schools and at least 49%

School Performance Framework Rating for elementary schools, with mathematics gains stronger than other like schools. Also, the school must show high gains on the CSAP and CELA tests for the past three years relative to other schools serving the same grade levels. The school must also have an open enrollment policy.

Subjects

Subjects from the study school that will participate in utilizing the Val-Ed tool to rate the principal include the principal, the principal supervisor, and the teachers of the school. The principal will also undergo an interview and a narrative inquiry session to further illuminate leadership practices currently in place in this successful school. The principal must have three years of experience in the school selected for this study so that school achievement can be attributed to the leadership practices in this school.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis for this study is the specific and particularized leadership practices of the principal of a successful school serving ELA learners. These leadership practices will be identified by the instruments and surveys used in this study. The definition of leadership practices derived from the literature review and the conceptual frameworks used in this study will help in the identification of these leadership practices. Additionally, the stories told by the principal about their personal life experiences will help provide insight about critical experiences and pivotal challenges and influences that have shaped how they as a successful leader have shaped their leadership practices.

Seven Stages of This Research

The basic overall design of this study is a staged, qualitative/quantitative case study design (Merriam, 2009). The seven stages are listed and described briefly below.

Stage one—literature review. This stage is an historical review of literature on learner-centered research. This review begins with the implications of the effective schools movement, and evolves towards the key conceptual frameworks used in this study with a specific focus on the emergence of the construct of a leadership practice.

Stage two—identifying schools, building research tools, and piloting and calibration of interview protocol. In this stage, a single school was identified from the list of successful schools identified within the Denver Public School District where the principal and the teachers and principal's supervisor were willing to participate in this study. Of the 22 schools that met the five site selection criteria, only 13 remained when the six criteria of the principal having at least three years of experience were applied. The researcher made initial contact with the school to explain the study and to acquire the commitment to participate in this study. All interview protocols, coding instruments, and related IRB protocols/applications, forms, and related permissions required for research from Denver Public Schools and the participating school were prepared. The researcher piloted both interview protocols with practicing principals who are not part of the study and made modifications to protocol questions. The researcher practiced using Echo Smart Pens for note taking and recording strategies.

Stage three—administration of VAL-ED survey. The research mentor, Dr. Connie L. Fulmer, visited the school during a portion of a faculty meeting to present the study to the teachers and to share the logistics of the online administration of the VAL-ED survey. Dr. Fulmer, was the administrator of the survey ID and PASSWORD CODES for the school principal, the principal's administrators, and each teacher in the school. All teacher data collected through the VAL-ED survey was aggregated and no

data are able to be identified as coming from any particular teacher. Data were analyzed in house at Discovery Education (www.discoveryeducation.com) and a detailed principal report was produced. Those IDs and PASSWORDs were sent by email to the participants (principal, principal's supervisor, and the teachers) along with the URL for the survey. Teachers were given a start date and an end date for participation in the survey. When the principal reports were returned from Discovery Education, the VAL-ED results were reviewed, and higher rated areas on the VAL-ED Matrix for the principal of this study were identified and used to develop the interview protocol instruments to be used in Stage Four.

Stage four—constructing and using leadership practice interview protocol.

Based on the areas of strength on the VAL-ED survey, the researcher drew relevant questions from the Leadership Practice Interview Protocol associated with those areas. The researcher set an interview date with the principal, reviewed their VAL-ED results, and conducted an interview to determine specifically what it is that they are doing in this successful school serving ELA-learners and in particular, how they are doing it. This stage resulted in a list of leadership practices that are detailed using codes from the Leadership Practice Study Coding Protocol.

Further, this stage showed the alignment between these specific and particularized leadership practices and the two conceptual frameworks guiding this work. Principal interview protocol data was tape recorded (with permission obtained), and then transcribed for analysis. In addition, the researcher took field notes during the interview using pre-prepared forms that provided for tally options and short notes related to the five essential supports and the fourteen key indicators associated with the Essential Supports

& Indicators (Bryk et al. 2010) and the VAL-ED matrix (Goldring, 2009). Interview transcripts were analyzed using DEDOOSE, a quantitative/qualitative data analysis web application (<http://www.dedoose.com>). The interview protocol used in Stage Four is tightly aligned with the two key conceptual frameworks mentioned just above in this paragraph.

Stage five—narrative inquiry protocol. The interview protocol used in Stage Five is much more open ended and designed to elicit critical life and work events from the principal, or his or her back story of how specific and particularized leadership practices were developed, implemented, improved, and maintained. These interviews were recorded (with permission obtained) and then transcribed. The transcript was shared with the principal once completed for the purpose of clarification, refinement or triangulation of the research narrative.

Stage six—cross-case analysis questions. Since this study is one of five thematic dissertation studies being conducted by the School of Education and Human Development and five of Denver Public Schools successful schools serving ELA-learners, at this point in all five studies, questions emerged from these individual dissertations that can be answered using data already collected. This study examines the following questions: (a) What self described leadership practices of principals at schools for ELA-learners are in place as a targeted effort to produce high mathematics achievement data, and (b) What are the leadership practices in place at schools for ELA-learners that correlate to the Bryk et al. (2010) indicators of math success and/or failure?

Stage seven—presentation of research findings. At the completion of this work, research findings will be prepared for presentation. A defense of this work was

made with the UCD Dissertation Committee. After a successful defense and incorporating any requested changes or recommendations, a presentation with the appropriate, interested parties from Denver Public Schools will be scheduled. I hope to present these researching findings, publish journal articles from this work, and to promote the finding of this work in any way that supports positive changes in educational policy and practice, especially those that target ELA learners or students living in poverty.

The seven sections above were created for the IRB approval processes required for this study and present a research chronology of this work. Both UCD and DPS IRB review panels have approved this study. A final step before beginning is to present this study to the committee, solicit feedback and to incorporate any changes or final recommendations for improving this work.

Instruments

Three data collection instruments are used in this study. They include: the VAL-ED Survey, the Leadership Practices Interview Protocol, and a Narrative Inquiry Protocol. Each of these instruments is described below.

VAL-ED Survey

The VAL-ED survey instrument produces quantitative data from a 360-degree survey of the perceptions of the principal's competence levels (as assessed by the principal, the principal's supervisor, and the teachers of this school) in 36 areas of the VAL-ED Matrix (created from six core components and six key processes) scored as either below basic, basic, proficient, or outstanding, and reported as means and percentile ranks. Qualitative data from two separate interview protocols (the Leadership Practices

Interview Protocol and the Narrative Inquiry Protocol) were used to investigate the higher-scoring areas on the VAL-ED MATRIX.

For principal and supervisor respondents, there are two questions represented by each of the 36 areas on the VAL-ED Matrix. Respondents indicated the source of evidence for each behavior and rate the effectiveness of the behavior. Sources of evidence include (a) reports from others, (b) personal observations, (c) school documents, (d) school projects or activities, (e) other sources, and (f) no evidence. The levels of effectiveness include (a) ineffective, (b) minimally effective, (c) satisfactorily effective, (d) highly effective, (e) outstandingly effective. If there is no evidence of a leadership behavior, the respondent must indicate *ineffective* for the effectiveness level.

Teachers are asked to complete 36 questions that relate to the principal's leadership processes and the components of their leadership with one question related to each area on the VAL-ED Matrix. These forms are created by randomly assigning one survey item from one area of the matrix and the other survey item from the same area to the other form. Both forms are distributed as evenly as possible during the teacher survey administration. See Appendix A as an example of the teacher survey prior to the creation of parallel forms. A distribution of scores on all survey items will be provided in the feedback for three categories; (a) how the principal scored him or herself, (b) how the supervisor of the principal scored the leadership behaviors of the principal, and (c) how the teachers as a group scored the principal.

Leadership Practices Interview Protocol

The Leadership Practices Interview Protocol will be used to identify specific and particularized leadership practices. The protocol was developed to offer a question

prompt for each of the thirty-six VAL-ED matrix sections and to provide a list of questions that will be used to develop semi-structured interviews. Questions proffered to the principal are chosen from the complete repository of questions to reflect the areas in which principals scored proficient or outstanding on the VAL-ED report. Further, each question has been shaped to reflect at least one of the essential supports and indicator codes (Bryk et al., 2010). The Leadership Practices Interview Protocol can be found in Appendix B of this paper.

Narrative Inquiry Protocol

The Narrative Inquiry Protocol is an open-ended interview protocol that is meant to elicit critical life and work events that can provide the backstories of the development, implementation, improvement, and maintenance of these identified leadership practices. The Narrative Inquiry Protocol is designed to probe more deeply into the principal's thought process. It provides a time for the principal to provide a backstory for how specific and particularized leadership practices were developed, implemented, improved, and maintained. The questions used for the narrative interview are open ended in an attempt to elicit an open response from an engaged and cooperative principal. The questions are constructed to avoid misunderstanding, but so the principal can be allowed to speak freely if they respond in an unexpected way or answer a question that might be asked later in the interview. See the Narrative Inquiry Protocol in Appendix E.

Data Collection

This section outlines the methods used to collect the data from the aforementioned instruments. The researcher will make initial contact with the school to explain the study and will acquire a commitment from the principal to participate in this study. Data will

be collected through use of the following instruments: VAL-ED survey, the Leadership Practices Interview Protocol, and the Narrative Inquiry Interview Protocol. Pilot testing of the interview protocols will take place between thematic dissertation group members. Data collection will take place within the fall of 2012, and analysis will continue throughout the spring of 2013.

VAL-ED Survey Data Collection

During a faculty meeting, the researcher visited the school to present the study to the teachers and to explain the logistics of the online administration of the VAL-ED survey. My research mentor, Dr. Connie L. Fulmer, will be the administrator of the survey ID and PASSWORD CODES for the school principal, the principal's administrators, and each teacher in the school. Participants are given an anonymous ID code and password to take an online survey located at a specified URL, and a start and end date for administering the survey will be communicated. Individual responses are sent to Discovery Education for analysis purposes and are not identified. Those IDs and PASSWORDs were sent by email to the participants (principal, principal's supervisor, and the teachers) along with the URL for the survey. Teachers were given a start date and an end date for participation in the survey. Both interviews were audio taped and transcribed.

Leadership Practice Interview Protocol Data Collection

The researcher provided questions gleaned from the Leadership Practice Interview Protocol Instrument (see Appendix B) to the principal ahead of the actual interview. These questions were gleaned from the Leadership Practice Interview Protocol Instrument and represent areas in which the principal scores most highly. The

researcher contacted the principal to schedule time for the Leadership Practice Interview. The results of the VAL-ED Survey were shared, and any questions that the principal had were answered. The interview was tape recorded, and field notes were also taken by the interviewer. With the permission of the principal, the interview was recorded with a Livescribe Smartpen so that both an audio record and scripted impressions exist. This way, direct quotes that are considered especially important will be retrievable and emphasized in the reporting. The setting and any relevant notes about the physical setting were made, and any other contextual notes including time and date as well as observations about the neighborhood and the after school parent pick up were made.

Narrative Inquiry Interview Protocol Data Collection

On a different date from the administration of the Leadership Practice Interview, the Narrative Inquiry Interview was scheduled. During this interview, the principal reflected upon his or her leadership practices in a more open ended manner. The Narrative Inquiry Protocol is designed to elicit the motivations behind the behaviors that have been identified leading to the success of ELA-learners. The principal's responses to interview questions was recorded with Livescribe Smartpens with the permission of the principal. The interview was tape recorded verbatim, and field notes were also taken by the interviewer. This way, direct quotes that are considered especially important will be retrievable and emphasized in the reporting. The setting and any relevant notes about the physical setting, and other contextual notes including the time and date were made. A follow-up session may be requested for clarification and/or refinement purposes.

Data Analysis

This section presents the data analysis techniques that were used with the four instruments of this study, the VAL-ED survey, the Leadership Practices Interview Protocol, the Narrative Inquiry Interview Protocol, and the VAD-ED survey. Triangulation of data from all instruments is also discussed.

VAL-ED Survey Data

Data from the online survey (VAL-ED) is analyzed at Discovery Education (<http://valed.discoveryeducation.com/>) for all survey respondents including the principal, the staff, and the instructional superintendent for the chosen school. This seventy-two item survey asks respondents to identify the source of the data used as evidence for the score given. This data is reported as a mean (*M*) score for each item the survey by each of the categories. The compilation and comparison of the mean scores from each item in each category are interpreted against a national representative sample, thus providing a percentile rank.

A proficiency rating of below basic, basic, proficient, or outstanding is assigned to the principal. When the principal scores either proficient or outstandingly for any core component and key process, the related question from the Leadership Practices Interview Protocol was selected to prompt further discussion for the interview.

Analysis of Leadership Practices Interview Data

Transcribed data were imported to the online coding software DeDoose, which is a web based application for analyzing text of qualitative and mixed methods research. The analysis of the Leadership Practices Interview Data revealed the use and implementation patterns of the Essential Supports and Indicators and the VAL-ED

components and processes for the particular leader. Once the transcript was uploaded to Dedoose, an exhaustive reading and rereading of the transcript ensued in order to code all applicable passages with the coding inventories that were developed for this study. If a unique category of leadership behaviors was found during the analysis of the transcription, then the new category was added to the list of codes.

Analysis of Narrative Inquiry Interview Data

Again, for the analysis of the Narrative Inquiry Interview, the transcription of the interview data was imported into DeDoose, a web-based application for analyzing text of qualitative and mixed methods research. The analysis of the data proceeded in the same way as for the analysis of the Leadership Practice Interview, but with an emphasis on gleaned unique leadership behaviors that can be defined as emergent codes. The researcher read the transcript multiple times in order to exhaustively and completely code the text.

Specifically, analysis of the Narrative Inquiry Interview data was performed by separating the resulting ideas into themes that include, but are not limited to work events and life events. Life events categories may be further analyzed as early childhood, high school, preparation for work, and experiences from work. Analysis of idiosyncratic stories of the principals from successful schools reveal how the constructs contained in the foundational conceptual frameworks apply to these data.

Coding Inventories

This section describes the coding inventories that were developed for this study. Since two conceptual frameworks provide the underlying structure of this work, it was important to bridge the language and ideas shared by the two frameworks. The resulting

coding inventories serve both to separate distinct practices and to align the constructs with each other. The coding inventories are presented in Appendices D and E.

Essential Supports and Indicators Codes (ES-I). The Essential Supports and Indicators Codes were interpreted for this study, then segmented and coded for identification. Obvious letter combinations for each of the five essential supports and fourteen indicators, letters were used to represent these elements. These essential support codes and indicator codes were then matched to create a master list of how the essential supports aligned with the relevant indicators. The resulting codes are presented in Appendix D. These codes will be applied to appropriate sections of the interview transcripts used to categorize and enumerate principal responses to both interview protocols.

Essential Supports and Indicator Codes Aligned with VAL-ED Codes. This set of codes was created by aligning the ES-I codes with codes from the VAL-ED Matrix. In other words, for each of the 36 intersections in the VAL-ED matrix, one or more compatible ES-I codes were entered to in effect integrate the two coding frameworks. For example, the VAL-ED matrix area of Planning for High Standards (HS) is aligned with Instructional Guidance and Curriculum (IG-CA) from the ES-I framework. This coding inventory is found in Appendix E.

Triangulation and Member Checking

Data was triangulated between the measurement instruments in order to show the trustworthiness of the data. The coding inventories described in the previous two paragraphs allow the triangulation of the VAL-ED Survey, the Leadership Practice Interview Protocol, and the Narrative Inquiry Interview Protocol. The Essential Supports

and Indicator (ES-I) Codes are aligned with VAL-ED codes via the inventory described above. Excerpts from the transcripts that relate to specific behaviors were coded and triangulated with Dedoose. In addition, member checking were accomplished when the narrative of the story or stories shared by the principal are shared with the principal and are confirmed by the principal as being a “true” narrative from his or her perspective.

This study is one of five thematic dissertation studies focused on leadership practices of principals of successful schools serving ELA-learners, and as a result, data from these five studies will be used to explore cross-case questions that emerge during this final stage of these individual studies.

Summary

This chapter presents the methodology used to execute this staged, qualitative design. This study uses the definition of leadership practices and results from the VAL-ED Survey to identify leadership practices that are being used by the principal of a successful school serving ELA learners to ensure a positive impact of that school on student growth/achievement in mathematics. Schools were identified from the list of successful schools serving ELA learners in DPS. Subjects from the study school that participated in rating the principal include the principal, the principal supervisor, and the teachers of the school. The principal also responded to an interview and a narrative inquiry session to further illuminate their leadership behaviors. Three data collection instruments were used and include the VAL-ED Survey, the Leadership Practices Interview Protocol, and the Narrative Inquiry Protocol. Data from the online survey (VAL-ED) will be analyzed at Discovery Education (<http://valed.discoveryeducation.com/>) for all VAL-ED survey respondents including the

principal, the staff, and the instructional superintendent for the chosen school. Data collection took place in early 2013, and analysis continued throughout the spring of 2013. The purpose of this research is to identify specific and particularized leadership practices being used by principals in successful schools serving ELA learners. The findings of the study will contribute towards an understanding of how to positively impact academic achievement of ELA learners.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of this study, which focuses on describing an applied leadership practice of a principal in a successful school that serves urban, low income, ELA students. Since the definition of a leadership practice for this study is contextually based, the first section details the case study demographics of the particular school. The second section answers the question about the leadership practice used by this principal by describing and contextualizing the principal's leadership practice. The third section aligns the findings of the study with evidence-based frameworks of the VAL-ED Matrix and the Essential Supports & Indicators Framework. The fourth section explores how the principal's critical life and professional incidents contribute to an understanding of how their leadership practices were developed. The fifth section addresses a cross-case question and utilizes data from the school in this study and four other school that are part of this thematic dissertation research to determine which research based indicators are related to relative success or failure in mathematics in these five schools. Finally, the sixth section provides an applied definition of a leadership practice that is based both upon the evidence gathered in this study and a review of relevant literature.

Case Study Demographics

The demographics of schools are important factors in how schools were selected for this study. For the purposes of this research, a successful school is defined as scoring over 50% on the growth section of the school's yearly growth assessments as defined by CDE measures. The school for this study was chosen because it serves not only large

numbers ELA students, but also a large percentage of ELA students. It also has an open enrollment policy and serves a majority percentage of students in poverty as indicated by the numbers of students eligible for free and reduced lunch. To be considered for this study, the principal was required to have a three-year tenure in order to ensure that the success of the school was a result of the principal's leadership efforts. When all of these conditions were used as filters on the entirety of schools in the district of Denver Public Schools, only nine schools met the criteria set forth to be included in this study.

The school selected to be in this study, Wade Smith K-8 School, is a charter school located in the northern urban area of Denver, Colorado. As a school of choice, the population of Wade Smith School does not necessarily reflect the demographics of the immediate neighborhood. Since the 2008-09 school year, the school has increased overall enrollment by 20%, and has become a school with a majority of ELA students. In the present school year, over 60% of students are ELA students, and nearly 95% of students qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL). Over 98% of Wade Smith students are minority students, and of that majority, an increasing amount are Hispanic. Of the ELL students, the predominant language is Spanish. The picture that emerges of Wade Smith is a school where a successful ELA program is in place, and where a large and growing community chooses to attend the school to gain access to this program.

The structure of the school program also shapes the demographics. Because the school is a K-8 school, families are committed to a long-term relationship with the school, especially if siblings attend. For example, because there is a full-day preschool program, if a family has children whose ages span over four years, the family would have children at the school for fourteen years. Since the school is a school of choice, there is

no bus service, so a commitment to this school is not a trifling matter with respect to family organization and scheduling. It is within the context of this particular school that I focused my research efforts and investigated the leadership practices in place by asking the following research questions listed and answered in the sections below.

Research Question #1

Using the definition of a leadership practice as a guide, what are the specific and particularized self-identified leadership practices used by the principal in this study to ensure the positive impact of that school on student growth/achievement?

The definition of leadership practice applied in this study is explicated by the frameworks found in Chapter II which, when taken as a whole, incorporates the elements of leaders, followers, and specific contextual situations that focus upon learner-centered interactions and setting and achieving proximal goals that lead to distal goals. Figure 5 illustrates how one element of a leadership practice is the focus on the *interaction* between a leader, the followers, and the situation (see Figure 5). For the definition used here, followers actually become part of the elements of a leadership practice rather than passive recipients of leadership since leadership practice is rooted in the interactions between the leaders and followers. That is, leadership practice is not the isolated actions of principals, but the interactions of people within the school towards a common goal.

The *work focus* of a leadership practice is a second necessary component of leadership practice since it acknowledges the context of the relationships. That is, leaders and followers work together to reach a shared understanding about expectations of the job identify their respective professional commitments. Leaders reinforce their relationships with followers by both clarifying their expectations and recognizing the

contribution and personal vision of each employee. Leaders and followers identify the target of their efforts within the situation or context to form the second component or the *work focus* of a leadership practice.

The third component of the leadership practice involves setting *proximal* or *distal* goals that are of critical importance to the stakeholders as they engage in their work (see Figure 7). Proximal goals make a task more manageable by breaking it into achievable parts. They also enhance the ability to monitor progress towards some larger goal by providing more continual feedback, which allows for accountability and consequences. However, distal goals form the ultimate big picture, and leaders can connect the dots for followers by assisting with setting proximal goals that lead to distal goal. Without setting clear goals, it is possible for workers to be busy, but not effective. By clearly setting the proximal and distal goals, leaders support followers in a focused effort towards achievable objectives.

In addition to these three components, analysis of the transcript data uncovered additional tools and activities that Ms. Daza utilized that were fundamental to achieving the proximal and distal goals of the Wade Smith School. The activities are described below in connection with their proximal and distal goals that provide purpose to the activity. All of these components and elements combine to reveal leadership practices of principals in context.

A Leadership Practice Uncovered

An analysis of the transcripts reveals four clear leadership activities that lead to the achievement of proximal goals, and ultimately distal goals related to improved student achievement. The first activities relate to the focus on literacy and language via

the ELA program in place at the school. A second set of activities revolve around sharing student data in grade level and subject area groups. A third set of activities address classroom instruction time, and a fourth set of activities focus on discipline issues in the school. The components and additional elements of this specific and particularized leadership practice will be detailed in the sections below and quotes will be drawn from the interviews to support this leadership practice finding.

Leadership Practice Triangle

The components of the leadership triangle at Wade Smith K-8 School reflect an administration that values distributed leadership. The principal, Caroline Daza works in tandem with her facilitator, Francis Zapata, and her two Assistant Principals, Terra Christy and Josh Wadsworth. The leadership team works so closely together, that Ms. Daza claims there are murmurs about an administrative “three headed monster”. There are twenty staff members who are considered members of the “specials” team, and these include interventionists, coaches and other specialists. Nine instructors teach art, music or physical education, twelve instructors are primary grade teachers, and ten teachers are devoted to the middle grades, five through eight.

Wade Smith is a choice school, and since the academic year 2008/2009, trends show an increase in overall enrollment, in percentage of Free and Reduced Lunch students, in Hispanic students, and in ELA students. ELA students comprise over 60% of the total student body population. The language-learning program at Wade Smith includes supported English content instruction and native language instruction in Spanish. This school was chosen because it clearly meets the criteria established in

Chapter II as an urban school with high numbers of ELA students who are attached to a poverty indicator.

Wade Smith K-8 is a TNLI (*Transitional Native Language Instruction*) school, so by consent decree (2012) of the U.S. District Court, the school offers language learning support via native language instruction in Spanish, supported English content instruction, and an English language development (ELD) program. The Consent Decree requires that the district—Denver Public Schools—ensures that all *ELLs* in the each educational program, and at each grade-level and *ELP* level, receive *grade-appropriate* content instruction. That is, language learning must not become an excuse for allowing students to receive instruction that is below grade level in any content area. The students and staff of Wade Smith K-8 School embrace this commitment.

Work Focus of the Leadership Practice

The leadership practice of the Wade Smith principal, Caroline Daza is rooted in the district's UIP and utilizes data sharing in focused teams in order to emphasize core academic areas. A tabulated arrangement of the most cogent features of Ms. Daza's leadership practice is presented in Table 1, below.

Principal Daza marshals every available resource to support literacy and language learning in all content areas, and holds teachers accountable with student data in order to push both students and faculty. Caroline holds high goals and announces them to her staff, saying for example, that her entire staff is aware that Wade Smith will be Denver's first 90/90/90 school, which is a school serving a population of students who are more than 90 percent eligible for free and reduced lunch, more than 90 percent ethnic minorities, and more than 90 percent meeting or exceeding high academic standards

Table 1

A Derived Leadership Practice Logic Model

	WORK FOCUS (Tools/Activities)	PROXIMAL GOALS	DISTAL GOALS
1	Activities focused on literacy and language through the ELA program.	Focused English Language Learning Occurs in All Classrooms (drives strong Hispanic community support of school programs).	<u>Student Achievement:</u> Content is accessible to all students. Improved proficiency in core academics. Lofty goals toward 90-90-90 school. Specific practice toward growth on standardized tests .
2	Activities focused on sharing student data in grade level and subject area groups and linking needs to resources.	Progress Monitoring (openness in communication creates sense of fairness in accountability).	
3	Activities focused on the maximization of classroom instruction time.	Grade Level Proficiency (reading, writing and math)	
4.	Activities focused on minimizing student discipline issues.	Powerful Culture of Learning for Students (student centered, respectful atmosphere that supports minimizing distractions and disruptions to instruction).	<u>Powerful Student Centered Learning Community</u> Increased relational trust with community. Stable or increasing enrollment and attendance. Low discipline issues

according to sanctioned tests of academic achievement. In order to achieve this goal, Caroline Daza put into place a variety of tools and activities to move forward the school's performance.

Emergent Activities/Tools Related to the Work Focus

This section contains descriptions and examples of the tools and activities that this principal and her leadership team utilize to achieve her proximal and distal goals. These activities included activities focused on literacy and language through the ELA program, activities focused on sharing student data in grade level and subject area groups, activities

focused on the maximization of classroom instruction time, activities focused on minimizing student discipline issues, and activities related to trust building. These activities were shared by the principal in her interview.

Activities focused on literacy/language through ELA program. Orchestrating the complexities of the state mandated ELA program requires the application of specialized expertise and an eye towards meeting the needs of diverse learners at every stage. Principal Daza uses the tool of providing support through specialized expertise in overseeing classrooms with extremely diverse student needs. In a description of the complexity and responsiveness of her classroom environment to the needs of the ELA students she explains –

~ *“So when the curriculum requires a co-teaching situation, we don’t pull out or segregate. We have ESL zone teachers who can push in and teach. I have some classrooms that have an ESL zone teacher, a SPED teacher, and the regular teacher all in the classroom co-teaching.”*

~ *“The zone teaching supports grouping by ELA level or IEP levels so that I can have multiple adults in there.”*

~ *“In math, for example, we don’t pull out. We push in.”*

Ms. Daza is keenly aware of the needs of the ELA learner and seeks out resources and expertise that will impact the students at her school. For example, she creates weekly “look fors” of things that are the “non-negotiables” for her school. Additionally, she makes a practice of communicating via email with her classroom teachers and asking for one specific item (the “look for”) that she wants to be able to observe in her weekly observations of every classroom. One recent “look for” was content language objectives.

She also ensures that small, proximal goals are met as this example of checking for classroom use of content language objectives was shared with me.

~ “I went into a room and it looked like it did not have all the components that were necessary. We’ve had a ton of PD’s on it. I have an ELL dean. I have an ELA tech, and I know they’ve done the PD and for some reason, it’s just not sinking in. But you know, I’ve been in every classroom, so I can say, hey Craig, Matt is doing it really well, so why don’t you go visit him, talk to him, and we’ll see what comes of it.”

This is the manner in which Principal Daza reinforces the importance of proximal goals, and enables her staff by linking teachers with expertise to teachers who need help. She actively supports her teachers in learning how to serve the population of students at the school. Her responsiveness to differentiated professional development centers on the ELA status of the students is illustrated in the following example.

~ “I put together a PD committee survey about how the PDs are going. I had a really strong response, about 90%, and we’ve already tweaked and made changes to the PD about what PD’s we’re offering and how differentiated they are. And you can imagine, because Wade Smith is a P-8 school, meeting the needs of all the teachers is hard. So, it’s developmental and it’s based on what our area focus is, that is, masterful content knowledge, so it has a lot to do with ELL’s and their learning.”

Classroom activities reflect the professional development that is centered on ELA services can easily be observed in this school. She reflects about Wade Smith School’s high mathematics scores by saying –

~ “I think that I hire really talented people in offering sheltering strategies, and math is a universal language.”

~ “It’s my belief that both instruction and the content have to be accessible to kids in math. I don’t think other schools pull two small groups in their math classrooms every day. That is an expectation in my school.”

~ “So a teacher will do a mini lesson, it’s about 10 to 15 minutes. Teachers are walking around looking at what understandings and misunderstanding kids have and then they will pull a group right on the spot and work with that group.”

~ “And if some group needs extension, they’ll pull that group in and the teacher will provide the support that’s needed. It doesn’t have to be in the moment.

Sometimes, the evidence will be the exit ticket or looking at the kids math assignment from the day before so that the teachers can pull a particular group of kids.”

The literacy/language examples above illustrate how this principal is an active instructional leader and holds content area classrooms to explicit expectations. The next section provides more evidence of her leadership practice around the use and sharing of data.

Activities for sharing student data in subject/grade level groups. At our initial interview and conversation, Ms. Daza described an *extraordinarily* frequent and comprehensive method of matching student achievement data with instruction that she invited me to observe a third grade meeting for further elucidation. The initial concept for this type of data matching came from a professional development session that Caroline Daza attended.

~ “I always try to find research based best practices or something that the district is using to anchor everything. I was at one conference and met a principal who talked about how she met with each teacher each semester to talk about their data. And I just thought, well that’s not enough. Okay. Yeah for you, and I’m glad you’re being highlighted, but we need to do this more frequently.”

The upshot of that line of thinking became sustained bi-weekly meetings that use data gleaned from 15 minute, standardized subject area computer adaptive testing (STAR testing from Renaissance Learning). The DPS district data people have aligned the STAR data to success level probabilities for TCAP, so Ms. Daza and her instructors and coaches can use the numbers predicatively to talk about achievement and instructional needs. Caroline describes this activity in the following way.

~ “I require that all teachers meet with their direct supervisors every two weeks and we look at their actual data. One week, we’ll look at what kids are doing well and what we need to work on together, and we’ll choose a group of students (4-6) that have a very similar instructional need, and the teachers will write a four week SMART goal for the kids and it will be very specific.”

~ “Like in kindergarten class it might be that the kids will use a capitol on the beginning of each sentence. So it can be very specific, but it will give them a big bang for the buck on the writing prompt rubric and then I check with them at the end of the month and ask whether or not we met our goal. Then we will ask why or why not, and we’ll set another goal.

~ “So I have individual meetings with all of my direct reports every two weeks. We try to move a small group of kids. If they could learn just one skill, we can

leverage that. And then we really talk about the instructional practices that it's going to take to do that."

During the day that I interviewed Principal Daza, I attended a third grade meeting. Three large sticky post-its adorned the walls of the small room. Two posters contained the headings *Writing*, *Reading*, *Math*, and under each heading were teachers' names with an associated percentage. Further, each teacher had notes about low or high skill areas such as those under one teacher's math scores that read, "*Warm up will include ratios*", or on another, "*3 kids identified for pull out with decimal and place value instruction*". On the third post-it note were notes about data interpretation. Since the goal of the school is to become a 90/90/90 school, 90% of the students must reach proficiency or above. The third sheet included names of which students need to be targeted for improvement and their target scores. The office hallways were also hung with charts of relative achievement percentages on target students for each instructor. While this information cannot be viewed by the public or by the students, it is meant to be openly viewed by instructors and coaches.

At Wade Smith K-8, connecting data with resources is another part of the leadership practice. Ms. Daza utilized Google Docs as a tool to record what interventions are in place.

~ "Since I have so many coaches, I have a weekly meeting and we have a Google Doc coaching log so I can see at any point who's getting a lot of support, and then I can recommend, for example, 'Ok, you've provided a great deal of support here. Let's back off gradually and see what happens'."

~ *“I’m in the process of standardizing how my coaches work with teachers. So, yes, when I look at the Google Doc, I can see what we’re doing, where someone is asking for support and what resources we have implemented.”*

Ms. Daza’s focus on the application of data extends to working with her teachers as well as her students. She reports –

~*“As adults, I think we do what we know how to do. So part of my job is to figure out what adults need. You know, this is based on their data as well. My job is to know my teachers well; and there are a lot of them.”*

The examples above provide more evidence of how this principal utilizes tools and activities to ensure that her school, teachers, and students are successful. The next section provides more evidence of her leadership practice around the use and sharing of data.

Activities for maximizing classroom instruction time. Principal Daza advocates for increased instructional time for her students in a variety of ways. Activities for maximizing instruction time vary from squeezing minutes into each core academic class, to paying for outside of class tutoring, to pushing on district rules about release time for school athletics. A core aspect to these activities is the focus on the importance of instruction for all students. Ms. Daza’s describes her activity around instructional time in the following way.

~ *“I looked at our schedule carefully to maximize instruction time. Like are they spending too much time at their lockers?”*

~ *“Next year my classroom teachers are not going to walk to specials. The specials’ teachers are going to come to the classroom and get the kids so that any*

time that is lost is time in arts, for example, and not instruction (in core academic areas).”

~ “I expect bell-to-bell instruction, so actually, all my kids leave after 3:00 because my teachers are teaching up to 3:00. And parents just know that they’re going to see their kid at 3:10 or 3:15.”

At times, Ms. Daza’s commitment to anchor her work in the district UIP and district policy has conflicted with her ability to provide more instruction time. In grappling with these dilemmas, she is challenged to provide time via many resources. This excerpt provides an example of some of the challenges and the tools she has used in solving them.

~ “All of the ELA students per the court decree have an English language development block, completely supported. What it means though is that they’re getting less content somewhere else because I still have a fixed amount of hours in my day. Schools that are labeled innovation schools have longer days, so they can have their kids get just as much content as well as their ELD block”

Her short term and long term solutions were articulated in the following way.

~ “You know that these ELD courses are only supposed to be for ELL kids, but what we’ve found is that kids in poverty also come with a language deficit. So a lot of our kids, well, all of our kids, are getting ELD. But to get the targeted instruction, I just use my own money and Sylvan comes in and I extend my day for kids.

~ “For next year, we really looked at our minutes, and we are extending our student day by 40 minutes, but the teacher day is not going to change.”

As was true in prior sections, the examples above provide evidence of the use of tools and activities ensure progress toward proximal and distal goals. The next section provides evidence of her leadership practice that is focused on minimizing discipline issues.

Activities focused on minimizing student discipline issues. Student disciplinary issues have decreased markedly since Ms. Daza became the principal of Wade Smith K-8 School. Her efforts to improve student culture have been subtle, but have had remarkable effects. Although Principal Daza reports that she has very little time to communicate directly with parents, she also acknowledges that her teachers and parent liaison do a great job of communicating with families. Other aspects of improved student culture include the buy-in that families obviate when choosing the school. Finally, she reports that over time, she has moved away from a more rigid, disciplinarian view to a more child centered view of discipline.

Ms. Daza considers the P-8 structure of the school to be an asset.

~ “I think that having kids for 10 years helps me. My 5th grade teachers talk to my 6th grade teachers. They’re talking about the expectations for the kids because we’re nice and small. This size also helps us. I love a K-8 and I take advantage of the good things it offers.”

~ “Also, I’m a 100% choice school. I’m not a boundary school. So families seek us out, and so once a family is in, everyone from their family is in. Most of our families have multiple kids and so siblings pass on the expectations. The little ones know what’s expected of them so it’s not a shock to either our parents or for our students.”

Reflecting upon her change toward a more child-centered discipline model, she reports –

~ *“When I first started here, I took over for a principal who was really doing that ‘get back in line’ thing. The kids had to walk three tiles away from the wall in the hallways. They were really monitoring the kids’ uniforms. I had people in my office yelling, ‘They didn’t have their shirt tucked in right! They need to have their parents come.’”*

~ *“I had been at another school and I was more of a disciplinarian too and someone said, ‘Let’s take a chance and do this’, and we began to look at how things changed; our parent surveys and our discipline referrals, so at first, it was like a blind leap of faith, but I would progress monitor and I could soon point to the fact that our referrals were down which meant that kids were in class more.”*

Finally, while Ms. Daza guards every moment that might be considered instructional time, she finds it worthwhile to devote 20 minutes at the beginning of every day to the centering act of eating in the small community of the classroom.

~ *“The kids have breakfast in the classroom and they have a morning meeting. The first 20 minutes is really devoted to getting the mind and bodies fed and then getting to the place where we can have a respectful classroom and we can all function in a good environment.”*

The result of these efforts is the lowest referral rate in the region. These are strong indicators of the impact that Principal Daza’s leadership practice is having on this school. Now the discussion will turn to how these tools and activities lead to the following proximal goals.

Proximal Goals of the Work Focus

The proximal goals associated with the activities described in the previous section are goals that can be measured and therefore achieved within short periods of time. This sort of accountability is compatible with Ms. Daza's leadership practice, and allows for a feedback loop of greater supports where needed. The following proximal goals (see Table 1 above) that were achieved through tools and activities that Principal Daza had in place (a) focused English language learning in all classrooms, (b) progress monitoring, (c) grade level proficiency: reading, writing, and math, and (d) a powerful culture of learning for students, were found to be evidenced in her leadership practice. She supports classroom instruction by creating attainable goals and linking resources to needs. She employs a variety of methods to provide feedback to herself and to her staff about progress toward those goals. This focus on proximal goals is thoroughly embedded in her leadership practice. Each of these is detailed below.

Focused English language learning occurs in all classrooms. The goal of focused English language learning begins with staffing decisions and includes monitoring and providing feedback about goal setting, providing professional development based on student needs, and finally pressing all with a sense of exigency.

~ "I look for people who use data, who build relationships with kids, who understand urgency, who've worked with populations of high numbers of ELA's and in poverty."

One method that Principal Daza uses to monitor and provide feedback about goal setting is consistent, weekly use of the DPS LEAP Framework. The DPS LEAP Framework provides an evaluation structure to assess and to provide feedback about

progress towards instructional goals as they are delivered in the classroom. This framework deliberately highlights classroom strategies such as subject area language objectives that are specifically oriented toward ELA classrooms.

~ “So, when I do my weekly walkthroughs, I take the first sheet from the district LEAP framework for each teacher and I will show them where I see them being effective or not effective or distinguished. And then I leave that with the teacher. I just highlight the area and I write the evidence of why I chose that area. I leave that with the teacher and they always double back to me to check in.”

The results from the LEAP framework are evaluated and professional development is based upon the needs that present themselves most persistently.

~ “We’re seeing where the teachers are scoring on their LEAPs and looking at the areas where they want to do better, and then we’re matching them to the PD, so it has a lot to do with ELL’s and their learning.”

The work at Wade Smith has become focused and fused with a sense of exigency because of the population of ELA students and needs.

~ “My teachers know how I feel about the urgency of our situation, because the population is traditionally or historically an underserved population and my kids are so smart because they are learning a language and content at the same time. So we can’t let these really smart kids fail.”

~ “We can’t wait. Our kids need us, and they can do it because they’re so smart.”

The examples offered about and the supporting evidence provided in Principal Daza's interview quotes illustrate how the proximal goal of the focus on English language learning occurs in all classrooms.

Progress monitoring and openness in communication. Another important proximal goal that emerged from the leadership practice of Principal Daza is her insistence upon openness in communication about progress monitoring. As principal Daza explains it, openness allows accountability since everyone realizes that all are being held to the same bar. An example of her openness in communication about setting goals is evidenced by the following example.

~ "I had one teacher who's kids were just sort of out of control. So I went in one day, I went in many days, and I tracked how many kids were on task and off task, and then I met with the teacher and told her, 'OK, two weeks from now, this is what I expect. I expect according to the framework that 75% of the kids are engaged in order to be effective, so that's what I expect.

~ "So, I know some great people who are doing some great management things and I've got this book for you to read, so you choose what you want to do to approach this, but in two weeks, this is what I expect'."

~ "So, I set little goals for my teachers that are manageable. I don't say, get you scores up and blah, blah, blah, I just wanted to see that kids were sitting in their seats when I come in."

This level of candor engenders the ability to quickly link resources with need because in meetings, everyone is present, and everyone takes on responsibility for the instruction. In this way, whatever expertise she personally lacks in specific technical

areas for ELA learners, Principal Daza provides via support for autonomy and distributed leadership with other experts in her building.

~ *“So the facilitator can ask for more resources, or we’ll make more time to come in, or we will make time with another professional who is doing that thing really well.”*

~ *“So it’s about making the link and knowing the data for the kids really well, but then also having the resources in the room too. That way, the teacher doesn’t leave [the professional development] by themselves thinking, well what’s this all about, I know that it exists, but I don’t really have time to go learn.”*

~ *“I’m lucky in that I have seven instructional coaches or facilitators and I know that in the world of education, there are mixed results with facilitators, but my facilitators sit in on my meetings with my teachers, and so do my administrators. Then we link the teachers with the resources right there.”*

Frankness in communication, also allows for agile problem solving because it is the culture for teachers to be able to ask for support and to utilize all expertise in the building, including each other.

~ *“I’m one person. I have two AP’s and a dean. While I do have the instructional coaches, we’re still a building of 107 adults, so that’s why I think it’s important to link peers with peers. That is, to link teachers with teachers.”*

~ *“For example, I’ll give release time for teachers to go observe another person to get a new skill. We’ll cover your time and it’ll give time for both of you to get together and sit and talk about what you saw so you can talk about what you saw in the instructional modes.”*

Principal Daza explains that the goal setting must be conjoined with consistent and open accountability or it lacks meaning for people. People begin to ask why they are working hard when they perceive that nobody else is working hard.

~ “I don’t want to have people say to me, “This is what I’m going to do”, and it doesn’t happen, so I don’t want to do that either.”

~ “When I first arrived, it was the accountability piece; it was teachers feeling like nobody was being held accountable, so there was this sense of apathy and teachers were like, ‘Why would I work hard if nobody else is?’ So that was the biggest thing I needed to change.”

~ “It is important that everyone is being held to the same bar. I heard a lot of ‘They were pets’, or ‘They were friends, so they got away with stuff.’ I wanted everyone to realize that there is one standard for everyone and I’m going to hold people accountable for that. Everyone.”

In prior work situations, if goals were not measured via the same accountability bars, Principal Daza found a prevailing feeling of apathy and accusations of favoritism.

Powerful culture of learning for the students. This next proximal goal is attained through the press of urgency that is communicated by the principal, through the teachers and coaches, to the students. This press of urgency and the culture of learning for students is present when staffing decisions are made.

~ “I think the culture starts to push back too. Folks who are not on board with having a responsive environment can decide to leave, and there’s no judgment in that. Not every place is a good fit for everyone.”

Indeed, the principal reports feeling the press towards improvement via her own supervisors. Classroom time is both maximized and optimized, and public celebrations are held for meeting small goals in academic achievement so that the entire school becomes aware and engaged with the acknowledgement of progress within the culture of learning.

~ *“We have a 90/90/90 crown that we give out to people. One of my kindergarten teachers has a class that has already met the end of February benchmark. On the math midterm, 91% of her kids passed at the proficient level. So we passed the crown around.”*

~ *“I have this sparkle, and I’ll sparkle for the smallest reason. And the teachers walk around with glitter on their heads and the kids will follow the sparkle trail to see who is sparkled, or I’ll go sparkle them in front of their kids.”*

~ *“My admin team will walk into a class and applaud, and the kids will say, ‘It’s you guys’, and we’ll applaud for each other.”*

~ *“I try to recognize my teachers in front of their kids and their people and their colleagues.”*

Principal Daza reports taking pride in the change of culture, which now includes a student centered respectful atmosphere for learning, since she began her work at Wade Smith K-8 School. Because her past job was a district level assistant director of intentional school culture, she has coached scores of other principals on how to develop school culture in their schools. Principal Daza says that in three years, her school culture evolved from one where stepping on the wrong tiles in the hallways incurred draconian

disciplinary measures, to one where it is more common to hear someone recommend the following to a student.

~ *“Hurry on to class or you might miss out on some learning!”*

The student centered nature of this educational setting at Wade Smith also extends to how teachers use data. Teachers are encouraged to use data as another tool to get to know their students.

~ *“I guess the biggest thing that I want teachers to do is to know each of their children. Both their scores academically and who they are as people.”*

~ *“We look at each individual child and they tell us their strengths and weaknesses.”*

Principal Daza reports that she refers to the school vision constantly. In her opinion, everyone needs to know how their own values align with the big picture. Once the commonalities are spoken, the work of building collaborative groups and distributed leadership and trust need constant reinforcement and support. These four proximal goals were important steps along the way to achieving the distal goals related to improved performance.

Distal Goals Resulting from the Work

Distal goals are the ultimate measure of effectiveness of a leadership practice. The distal goals that have been achieved by the students and teachers at Wade Smith School include both increased *student achievement* and a powerful *student centered learning community*. These overarching objectives are evidences by some of the following events and developments: (a) content that is accessible to all students with resulting improvement in achievement scores, (b) improved student proficiency in core

academics, (c) a lofty goal of becoming a 90-90-90 school motivating improvement efforts, (d) increases in student achievement and growth on standardized tests, (e) increased relational trust with the community, (f) stable or increasing enrollment and attendance, and (g) low discipline issues. These important distal goals have been realized by the levels of prior success of the proximal goals described in detail above (focused English language learning in all classrooms, progress monitoring, grade level proficiency, and a powerful culture of learning for students). Examples are provided below.

Increased student achievement. Principal Daza's leadership practice is remarkable in its success at moving an extraordinary set of students towards strong academic objectives. She has already helped her students achieve high levels of academic growth. Besides the overall increase in test scores, the school boasts programs designed to push against the upper levels of achievement such as a gifted and talented program. Despite the recent improvements in test scores and the general level of approval that her increasing enrollment reflects, Principal Daza is ambitious for her teachers and her students about future growth.

~ "Everyone can tell you that Wade Smith is going to be the first ever, legitimate 90/90/90 school. We're on our way, and that is our goal."

~ "I am so focused on just getting quality stuff in place right here, right now."

~ "We did offer the first AP class in the district to middle school kids. First ever, and we had two kids pass. So we had the first ever middle school in DPS pass the AP psych exam and get college credit."

~ "There is just no reason why my kids don't have the same status in TCAP as other kids. It's up to us to provide that. There is no reason."

Powerful student centered learning community. Principal Daza summarized her goal of achieving a powerful student centered learning community with a statement that may not be measurable via standardized exams, but which surely is a powerful and personal expression of values in her school.

~ “I want a place that’s good for kids to be. I want a place that I want my own kids. I have 12 faculty kids at this school here now.”

~ “These kids deserve the best. We’re here for these kids, and our goal is that all these kids get more than a year’s growth for us to do them a service.

Specific Leadership Practice Efforts Focused on ELA Learners

The specific leadership practices that are focused on ELA learners at Wade Smith include how Ms. Daza organizes and supports the structure and nature of the school ELA program. Ms. Daza’s administration and leadership team include both an English Language Dean and an Assistant Principal with expertise in the area of ELA learners. She also employs staff members who are specifically trained in coaching and supporting classroom instruction for ELA students. The intent of the school structure and the special vision and mission of the school permeates every communication and goal setting opportunity.

~ “Everyone can tell you that we are an ESL focus school. I do it in my communication with teachers, but also in my weekly news when I tell them the week’s goals. Then I also add the why... the purpose for whatever it is.”

However, while the ELA program offers some extra resources and support from the district, it has also proven to create some constraints upon Principal Daza’s leadership practice. For example, the court ordered language support that is provided to ELA

students means that these very students miss out on content area instruction that other students receive. On the other hand, Ms. Daza has realized the impact of the extra language support that the ELA program provides, and she then worries about how to support all her students, especially her students who live in poverty, to receive the same high levels of language learning. Her solution has been to extend the learning day by squeezing forty more minutes out of next year's schedule and to pay for extra after school tutoring for students for even more instructional time.

The deliberateness of the inclusion of language learning in each classroom is another effort that is employed by the staff at Wade Smith, and this effort is led by the principal. In considering why her math scores were so high compared to other like schools, Principal Daza reflected that her math classes are also language-learning classes where specific links are made between the content and how students access the content.

~ "It just takes an understanding of how kids develop in language and how kids access content at this age. I think that the biggest aha for us is that we are all teachers of language because our kids are learning language as they are trying to access content. That might be a piece of math success. "

~ "My teachers are in the habit that when they have an upcoming unit, they will schedule a meeting with one of our facilitators, our coaches, and they will backwards plan their unit together. During that collaborative time is where they'll say, 'oh.. we're doing decimals? I'm not strong in that'. And then another teacher can say, 'Hey, this is what I'm going to do.' So they plan their literacy and math lessons with a coach."

~ *“For me, it’s trying to model what’s worked in literacy, but for math.”*

The math classrooms are forums for explicit instruction for the acquisition and practice of academic language about mathematics.

In summary, the discussion above for Research Question #1 included an explanation of the leadership practice construct, which included the components of the leadership practice triangle (leader, followers, and the situation), the focus on the leadership practice work (tools, activities, and proximal goals) and the intentional focus on district and UIP goals—the distal goal. In each of these areas, findings are explicated and supports quotes from interviews with the principal were provided.

Research Question #2

How do the identified leadership practices align with key conceptual and evidence-based frameworks (VAL-ED Matrix and the Essential Supports & Indicators Framework) used in this study?

The VAL-ED Assessment of Leadership in Education was completed for Principal Daza by three respondent groups; teachers, the principal’s supervisor, and the principal herself. The test was administrated and scored in mid-January of 2013. A summary of the overall mean scores and percentile ranks are presents below (see Table 2). These mean scores have been nationally normed, and a performance level is assigned out of four possibilities; *Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, or Distinguished*. A response rate of 76% was achieved from the teachers, which is considered a high response rate, so the validity of the teachers’ ratings may be interpreted with some confidence.

Table 2

VAL-ED Core Component and Key Processes Ratings

Summary of Core Components Scores				Summary of Key Processes Scores			
	Mean	Performance Level	%-tile Rank		Mean	Performance Level	%-tile Rank
High Standards for Student Learning	3.60	Proficient	41	Planning	3.38	Basic	26
Rigorous Curriculum	3.34	Basic	27	Implementing	3.25	Below Basic	16
Quality Instruction	3.44	Basic	24	Supporting	3.29	Basic	10
Culture of Learning & Professional Behavior	3.46	Basic	20	Advocating	3.37	Basic	29
Connections to External Communities	2.77	Below Basic	5	Communicating	3.42	Basic	26
Performance Accountability	3.29	Basic	29	Monitoring	3.33	Basic	26

As the VAL-ED means and performance levels were examined, a schism became evident between the scores on the exam and the situational success of the principal in this study. Principal Daza scored *Below Basic* in two categories and *Proficient* in only one category. She scored *Distinguished* for no category, and she scored at the *Basic* level for all other categories. In order to understand these low ratings in juxtaposition and apparent conflict with the evidence of the high

performance of her students, Principal Daza's scores were further analyzed by examining the three respondent groups found in Table 3.

Table 3

Mean Effectiveness of Core Components and Key Processes by Respondent Group

Total Effectiveness Across Core Components	Principal	2.79	Total Effectiveness Across Key Processes	Principal	2.79
	Teacher	3.46		Teacher	3.46
	Supervisor	3.73		Supervisor	3.73
High Standards for Student Learning	Principal	3.5	Planning	Principal	2.83
	Teacher	3.58		Teacher	3.45
	Supervisor	3.73		Supervisor	3.86
Rigorous Curriculum	Principal	3.00	Implementing	Principal	2.82
	Teacher	3.38		Teacher	3.36
	Supervisor	3.63		Supervisor	3.57
Quality Instruction	Principal	2.83	Supporting	Principal	2.82
	Teacher	3.57		Teacher	3.50
	Supervisor	3.91		Supervisor	3.56
Culture of Learning & Professional Behavior	Principal	3.00	Advocating	Principal	2.55
	Teacher	3.63		Teacher	3.56
	Supervisor	3.75		Supervisor	4.00
Connections to External Communities	Principal	1.58	Communicating	Principal	2.91
	Teacher	3.23		Teacher	3.58
	Supervisor	3.50		Supervisor	3.78
Performance . Accountability	Principal	2.83	Monitoring	Principal	2.80
	Teacher	3.36		Teacher	3.51
	Supervisor	3.67		Supervisor	3.67

When viewed in this manner, a clear and surprising pattern emerged.

Principal Daza had rated herself very much lower than all other respondents. In fact, the difference in total effectiveness rating between her score of herself and her

supervisor's score of her was almost a full point (.94). In view of the manner in which categories are assigned, and since there are only five possible points, the difference of a point could make the difference between two categories of effectiveness, for example, the difference between *Below Basic* and *Proficient* is only .32 points, and the difference between *Basic* and *Distinguished* is .71 points. Additionally, the evidence sources used by the principal to rate herself were primarily *personal observation*. That means that her ratings of herself were low primarily independently of any archival information.

With the differences between Principal's self-ratings and the overall ratings in mind, the decision was made to use the VAL-ED scores minus the Principal Daza's low self-rating. Table 4 represents a summary of the same scores found in Table 2 but without the confounding element of the extra-ordinarily low principal self rating. Like Table 2, Table 4 provides data about overall mean scores and percentile ranking and an assignment of performance levels out of four possibilities; *Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, or Distinguished*. Notice that when the principal's self rating was removed, the performance levels improved for seven of the twelve categories. Table 4 data is used to examine Mean Effectiveness because the numbers for teacher ratings and supervisor ratings provide the best view of the principal's areas of strength.

Table 4 also illustrates that this principal's highest scoring core components were *High Standards for Study Learning, Quality Instruction, and the Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*. The highest scoring key processes for this principal were *Planning, Advocating and Communicating*.

Table 4

VAL-ED Core Component/Key Processes Ratings Minus Principal Self-Ratings

Summary of Core Components Scores				Summary of Key Processes Scores			
	Mean	Performance Level	%-tile Rank		Mean	Performance Level	%-tile Rank
High Standards for Student Learning	3.65	Proficient	47	Planning	3.65	Proficient	61
Rigorous Curriculum	3.50	Basic	40	Implementing	3.47	Basic	34
Quality Instruction	3.74	Proficient	54	Supporting	3.53	Basic	26
Culture of Learning & Professional Behavior	3.69	Proficient	42	Advocating	3.78	Proficient	75
Connections to External Communities	3.36	Basic	38	Communicating	3.68	Proficient	56
Performance Accountability	3.51	Basic	53	Monitoring	3.59	Basic	54

Table 5 below illustrates an accounting of the coded frequencies from the transcripts of the interviews for the six Core Components and six Key Processes of the VAL-ED Matrix. The frequencies for each coded area are visible for each components of Principal Daza's leadership practice. These results indicate a qualitative similarity between the VAL-ED assessment results of the teachers and superintendent of Wade Smith K-8 School with the self-description of leadership practices of the principal that challenges the self assessment of Principal Daza via the VAL-ED scores.

Table 5

Core Components and Key Processes Code Frequencies from Transcript Analysis

VAL-ED CODES	KEY PROCESSES					
CORE COMPONENTS	Plan (17)	Implement (17)	Support (32)	Advocate (70)	Communicate (36)	Monitor (27)
High Standards (48)	HS-P (3)	HS-I (4)	HS-S (5)	HS-A (16)	HS-C (6)	HS-M (4)
Rigorous Curriculum (19)	RC-P (1)	RC-I (2)	RC-S (6)	RC-A (7)	RC-C (2)	RC-M (1)
Quality Instruction (49)	QI-P (6)	QI-I (3)	QI-S (9)	QI-A (16)	QI-C (8)	QI-M (7)
Culture of Learning/ Professional Behavior (70)	CLPB-P (7)	CLPB-I (7)	CLPB-S (8)	CLPB-A (20)	CLPB-C (13)	CLPB-M (12)
Connection to External Communities (15)	CEC-P (0)	CEC-I (1)	CEC-S (3)	CEC-A (6)	CEC-C (4)	CEC-M (1)
Performance Accountability (12)	PA-P (0)	PA-I (0)	PA-S (1)	PA-A (5)	PA-C (3)	PA-M (3)

Similarly, Table 6 illustrates the frequencies of coded elements of the Essential Supports and Indicators (ES-I) framework were related during the interviews of Principal Daza. The four highest scoring areas were Professional Capacity (Quality of Professional Development), Professional Capacity (Work Orientation), Professional Capacity (Professional Community), and Student Centered Learning Climate (Academic Support

Table 6

Essential Support (ES) and Indicator (I) Code Frequencies (n) Resulting from Transcript Analysis

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS (ES) – INDICATORS (I)	ES-I	(n)
School Leadership – School Leadership	SL-I/IL	34
Parent-Community-School Ties – Teacher’s Ties to Community	PCST-TtC	6
Parent-Community-School Ties – Parent Involvement	PSCT-PI	6
Professional Capacity – Teacher Background	PC-TB	10
Professional Capacity – Frequency of Professional Development	PC-FPD	8
Professional Capacity – Quality of Professional Development	PC-QPD	13
Professional Capacity – Changes in Human Resources	PC-CHR	5
Professional Capacity – Work Orientation	PC-WO	36
Professional Capacity – Professional Community	PC-PC	25
Student Centered Learning Climate – Safety and Order	SCLC-S&O	8
Student Centered Learning Climate – Academic Support and Press	SCLC-AS&P	13
Instructional Guidance – Curriculum Alignment	IG-CA	9
Instructional Guidance – Basic Skills	IG-BS	10
Instructional Guidance – Application Emphasis	IG-AE	8

and Press). These categories are explained in Appendix D of this study, and they are linked to VAL-ED Core Components and Key Processes in Appendix E of this study. When a comparison is made between the Essential Supports and Indicators (ES-I), the incidents of coding from the interview transcripts show that the most common match was for the Core Components of the Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior and Quality Instruction.

Research Question #3

How do stories of this principal's critical incidents (both work and life related) contribute to an understanding of how a leadership practices was developed and why this leadership practice emerged and flourished within this particular school and community context?

When we first scheduled a second, hour long meeting for an interview about her critical life incidents, Principal Daza protested that she didn't have that much to say about herself. While I was prompt for the first extensive interview about her leadership practice, I found myself sitting in the main office for over a half an hour. Finally, Principal Daza invited me to join a data meeting with teachers so that I could see the practices that she had talked about in situ. About a half an hour of surprisingly emotional discussion ensued that was completely focused on in class instruction. Teachers applauded, some were near tears, others offered plans of help to struggling colleagues.

When the teachers finished the meeting and left, Principal Daza asked two of her leadership team members to stay, her Assistant Principal, Robin Moore and her head coach/facilitator, Karen Hutchins. Introductions ensued. Then, principal Daza asked each of the two leadership team members to talk about what they did in the school. The facilitator, Karen spoke about how Principal Daza had created her position, and how it had evolved into a key conduit of communication between the administration and teachers. Her job was to create and maintain a position of trustful and open exchange between both the teachers and the administrators. She spoke about how she had been supported to do a difficult and rare thing in schools which is to help create a culture of forthright and honest communication. Ms. Hutchins offered the following –

~ “One of my roles is getting a feel for what’s going on in the classroom. Advocating on the teachers’ behalf for what they need or don’t need and pushing back on the administration. More and more, I have a trusting relationship with the teachers. I’m in the classroom a lot. I talk with teachers. I know what’s going on with them. Also, I have a really trusting relationship with administration, so I have the ability to come in and say, ‘You’re doing it wrong.’ And we can have a professional conversation about what the real issue is and refer to data. I can advocate strongly for the teachers. When they ask for a change, I can come to the administration and get the real scoop and go back to teachers and say, ‘well, I couldn’t get that change, but here’s why, in a way that makes sense for them’.”

The Ms. Hutchins spoke about her personal life and shared that her commitment to school work was so encompassing that she worried about pursuing her personal goals.

Then, Principal Daza asked her Assistant Principal, Ms. Moore, to introduce herself and to explain how she viewed her position. She had worked with Principal Daza in the past, and in a difficult situation. Ms. Moore reported that she and Principal Daza both came to respect each other’s professionalism and skill. She appreciated working for Principal Daza because the principal’s style was not micro-managed, but to allow Ms. Moore to use her expertise to work on instructional leadership rather than more task oriented jobs like testing and lunch duty. She reported –

~ “I know that outside people don’t realize that this is really a group effort. The three of us do everything together. Some teachers call us the three headed monster, but that is not a common practice in schools, to have this level of

collaboration for hiring, for firing, for anything. It's a team thing. And that's how we learn, and we challenge each other."

Principal Daza added, -

~ "I think we get a better product, cause we're always in the room together and giving each other push back."

The Assistant Principal continued –

~ "So when Principal Daza's not here, things don't fall apart because Corey (the other AP) and I know exactly what to do when something comes up. And that's not because she says, "This is what to do", but it's because we know what to do."

The Assistant Principal described how Principal Daza had advocated for her and recently she had been asked to take on a top leadership position at another school within DPS. All of these administrators wanted me to know that they all worked together and that they communicated in trust with each other, and that that was the prevailing style at the school.

I kept thinking, *"Get to the story, get to the story, get to the story"*. I was running out of time set aside for this interview, and the principal was still making comments like

~ "We look at individual kids. We have facilitator support. We have high expectations. All kids are language learners."

I interrupted with –

~ "I would like to ask about your personal narrative and how you came to do what you do."

Principal Daza paused and said nothing. The Assistant Principal said –

~ "Go ahead and tell her your story."

Then the Assistant Principal turned to me and said -

~ *“Carolyn was an ice skater. She was a national level ice skater. She didn’t go to school all the time. Go ahead, Carolyn. Tell her your story.”*

Finally, the principal gave in and began to tell her story –

~ *“So my mom was a teen aged mom, a single mom when she had me. My mom is white, my father is black and he was married at the time. When my mom found out she was pregnant, she ran away from home and lived in an abandoned home in 5 Points (an urban ghetto of Denver) because she was a teenager and afraid.*

My mother’s uncle was the grand-wizard of the KKK in Kentucky and my grandfather was also in the KKK. My maiden name is Venable, and that is a huge name in the Klan. James Vennible owned the land in Georgia where all the lynchings took place that Martin Luther King spoke about. So, I’m a Vennible. Luckily, my grandfather is blind. He became blind due to malnutrition from being a prisoner of war in Japan in WWII. So they didn’t tell him. He probably died not knowing.

So, it’s all about equity for me. And I was able... I had a mother who was a hippie, teenaged mom who thought that I could do anything in the world. Good thing for that; and I ended up in 1996 as 11th best in the country in figure skating. So, through my experience with figure skating, I had to learn to set goals. From the second grade, I couldn’t go to school because it took too much time. I would skate every day for 6-8 hours.

I got into education by listening to my hair dressers. I have a psychology degree and a premed degree, but I wanted something else. So my hairdresser asked

me one day about education because she noticed that kids always gravitated towards me. So, I took some educational classes and here I am.

I think that it's all about equity. I was the kid who should not have achieved anything. I was the bi-racial kid, born in 1970 with a teenaged mom who had a high school degree with no earning power. I was one of those kids who probably should not have succeeded. So for me, all kids need to have high expectations. All kids can succeed.

I had an opportunity to work at a super exclusive private school. The kids flew on their own private jets, the parents didn't work and they had nannies. The Bush kids attended that school and they had secret service. They would always secure the perimeter of the campus. I felt as if all kids deserve that; those rich experiences, debating, thinking deeply about things. It was an equity issue for me. I didn't think that it was fair."

I shared with Carolyn that I imagined that she could never remove herself from the place where equity was not a central issue for her in her life. I asked how she used this crucible of an experience to move into the place of success in schools. Principal Daza continued –

~ "I had a background in going into schools and figuring out what's going on. My position was a district position to improve the culture of trust in a building. It's how I learned to look at what was going on and how to form distributed leadership, collaborative partnerships, and to know the kids, and to be the face of the school. I had 31 schools. It was through that work of helping principals to lead a school that I learned about leading a school."

It was at this point that Principal Daza began to talk again about her commitment to the students and to what she does. At the time, what seemed like maddeningly self-effacing behavior (this insistence that we talk about the relationships and the teams and everything that happens in the school that is important except her) was finally manifest as the central story. From a point of view that insisted upon equity, Principal Daza utilized a shared leadership practice because it worked to move *everyone* forward. Principal Daza paused and nodding towards her administrative team said –

~ “*I didn’t want to do this and they signed me up for this.*”

I smiled back at her and the other members of the leadership team. However reluctant she had been she had finally shared her story.

Research Question #4

What Essential Supports and Indicators (ES-I) related to relative success or failure in mathematics from the validated research of are found in other schools conducting this research?

This section reports on findings related to specific Essential Supports and Indicators (ES-I) that are tied to achievement in the core academic areas in math. Strength in particular supports are shown to work more strongly in substantially improving mathematics achievement, and weaknesses in particular supports are shown to work against growth in mathematics strength at schools. In the following paragraphs, the relationship between applied codes that are known to be drivers for improvement or stagnation in mathematics for the school in this study and the schools in other thematic studies will be explored. The Essential Supports and Indicators coding framework is available in Appendix D for reference.

Essential Supports that are shown to be most strongly connected to student growth in mathematics are (a) *School Leadership*, (b) *Parent Involvement*, (c) *Professional Community*, (d) *Work Orientation*, and (e) *Curriculum Alignment*. These five Essential Supports were compared to coded frequencies for leadership practice at the study schools in Table 7. The coded transcripts from principals for each of four successful schools that serve high poverty, ELA students, exhibit the following frequencies for the above mentioned codes related strongly to mathematics success. Table 8 below illustrates the relative frequencies of the complete array of ES-I codes occurring in the four study schools.

Table 7

ES-I Codes Associated with Math Improvement

ES-I Codes Strongly Associated with Growth in Mathematics	Five ES-I Codes Most Strongly Associated with Growth in Mathematics Achievement at each of Five study schools				Total Frequencies of Codes Strongly Associated with Mathematics Achievement
	School #1	School #2	School #3	School #4	
School Leadership	31	35	18	16	100
Parent Involvement	9	6	3	7	25
Professional Community	24	25	26	28	103
Work Orientation	19	36	17	24	95
Curricular Alignment	11	7	5	1	24

First, and most obviously, (in Table 7) *School Leadership*, *Professional Community* and *Work Orientation* stand out as three areas that are both identified by the ES-I framework as necessary for forward movement in math and are frequently occurring

Table 8

Frequency Count for ES-I Codes for Four Study Schools

Highest Frequency Codes Found in Four Study Schools	Frequency of Codes for Each of Four Study Schools				Total Frequency of Times Coded in Transcripts
	School #1	School #2	School #3	School #4	
Professional Community	24	25	26	28	103
School Leadership	31	35	28	16	100
Work Orientation	19	36	17	24	95
Student Centered Learning Environment	28	2	21	21	72
Professional Capacity	33	0	35	2	70
Academic Support and Press	18	11	17	10	56
Instructional Guidance	20	5	9	6	40
Quality of Professional Development	5	13	8	5	31
Safety and Order	9	6	10	2	27
Parent Involvement	9	6	3	7	25
Curriculum Alignment	11	7	5	1	24
Application Emphasis	7	7	8	0	22
Frequency of Professional Development	2	8	6	3	19
Parent-Community-School Ties	9	0	7	3	19
Changes of Human Resources	3	5	3	5	16
Teacher Ties to Community	1	6	2	6	15
Basic Skills Orientation	7	5	2	0	14

aspects of the leadership practices for the four schools in this study. However, frequencies of *Parent Involvement* and *Curricular Alignment*, which also highly correlated to math success in the ES-I framework had substantially lower recorded frequencies than those for *School Leadership*, *Professional Community* and *Work Orientation*.

It is interesting to consider that the recorded frequencies of leadership practice for these study schools vary widely. For example, the total frequencies of *Curricular Alignment* and *Parent Involvement* are substantially lower than many of the other ES-I. The recorded incidents of ES-I codes within the three schools of the thematic studies supports the ES-I framework in that no school recorded a complete absence of any of these aspects of leadership practices. That is, although this section has examined particular supports individually, the ES-I framework predicts that schools strong in some or most supports were much more likely to improve in mathematics than schools in which any one support was totally lacking.

Research Question #5

Based on a review of relevant literature (the conceptual underpinnings and evidenced-based strategies) and evidence gathered in this study, what has been learned about an applied definition of a leadership practice?

The answer to this question is based upon both the definition of a leadership practice that was formed via a review of the relevant literature on this subject and the findings of the leadership practice that became evident through evidence gathered in the study. The following paragraphs will review the prior definition of a leadership practice, the new elements of a leadership practice that emerged in the data analysis for this study,

and more thorough explanations and examples for each of the emergent elements of a leadership practice.

Definition of a Leadership Practice Prior to Study

The definition of leadership practice applied in this study was first explained in Chapter II and consist of three components: (a) a leadership practice triangle – leader, follower, and a situation, (b) a work focus (any elements of either the VAL-ED Matrix or the ES-I framework), and (c) a targeted goal or outcome. Finally, this definition of a leadership practice is constructed on conceptual frameworks drawn from learner-centered leadership.

Elements of a Leadership Practice That Emerged In Data Analysis

The observations of this study show how the following additional concepts are fundamental to an applied definition of leadership practice within the context of successful schools serving high poverty ELA students. The additional elements of a leadership practice that became evident through the observations and reported practices of the successful principals include specific tools used by the principals and other leadership figures in the schools, activities which the principal sanctions, initiates or personally leads, proximal goals that support distal goals and are monitored regularly, distal goals anchored in district goals or school vision, and effects of critical life and work experiences that all come together to form a principal's story.

Tools. The tools that were consistently used by Principal Carolyn Daza of Wade Smith K-8 School form a broad array of processes, technologies, and funding mechanisms that provide structure or act as additional resources for the school. For example, pre-existing testing suites such as STAR testing allow a quick, validated and

standardized way to assess students' math and reading skills. When it was realized that results of the test were not explicitly correlated to TCAP results, a request was made to the district level data support to provide that information. The result is a tool by which is used as a week by week measure of mathematics and reading overall achievement as well as an indicator of progress on sub-skills.

Another tool is the free and reduced lunch funding. Where this indicator of poverty is often considered a disadvantage, at Wade Smith, a significant portion of time is taken every morning for students to share their breakfast with their peers and their teacher in a very human experience. A respectful daily repast forms the beginning of every day on a powerfully positive note. Funding is also used by Principal Daza as a means to provide an extended day for some students and focused tutoring for others.

Principal Daza utilizes existing tools either because the tools are sanctioned or already validated or because the tool is succinct and readily available. An example of how she employs tools in this way is her use of the district's LEAP framework as an evaluative tool and a measure of progress towards goals for her staff and for her coaches.

Activities. An example of activities that are used consistently by Principal Daza as a part of her leadership practice include the numerous themed meetings that meet consistently. There are grade level meetings, content area meetings, school leadership meetings, and administrative meetings. Each meeting is utilized to communicate and problem solve with respect to the proximal goals that have been set for the group. Exchanges within these group meetings are communicated to all faculty members.

Another activity is the principal's weekly walk-through of the classroom. Principal Daza is present in every classroom at least once a week, writing observations

about the classroom, the students and the instruction, and leaving a copy of this information for the classroom teacher. A copy of the weekly evaluations are also kept, compiled and evaluated as sources for what sort of professional development is needed.

A great deal of activity within Wade Smith K-8 School centers around context based coaching and collaborative time between teachers. There is a position at the school that has been created to support teachers and coaches, and to act as a trusted communicator between both administration and the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to observe other teachers and to conduct instruction in other teachers' classrooms. All of this activity is centered on specifically communicated needs and coordinated by coaches, teachers, and the instructors themselves.

Proximal Goals. Proximal goals are used at Wade Smith K-8 School to make a task more manageable by breaking it into achievable parts and to enhance the ability to monitor progress towards some larger goal by providing more continual feedback, which allows for accountability and consequences. Proximal goals at Wade Smith K-8 School follow the SMART goal dictums. One characteristic of proximal goals at this school is that they are consistently measured both against past progress and against distal or ultimate goals. There is an extraordinary sense of open accountability at Wade Smith. It as if there is a constant and public asking of the questions, *Where are your students? Where should your students be? What do you need to get them there?* The proximal goals are never random busywork. The proximal goals are all focused milestones that will lead to achievement of a named distal goal.

Distal Goals. From the point of view of Principal Daza, distal goals include the district UIP which is primarily based on achievement and growth data. Another, even

higher goal that she and her staff are pursuing is goal of becoming a 90/90/90 school.

Principal Daza supports other distal goals such as a culture of trust within the school and within the community of students and student families. The distal goals are expressed both by district definitions and by the school vision.

Critical life and work experiences. The critical life experiences of Principal Daza are unique and inimitable. As a mixed race child growing up with relatives that were dangerously and publically racist, her point of view is rooted in advocacy for equity in education. Her sense of urgency for the set of students that she serves also impacts her leadership content and style. I also believe that her experience as a nationally ranked competitive athlete allowed her to internalize the value of setting proximal goals in order to achieve larger distal goals.

Principal Daza has had several professional experiences that inform her leadership practice as it is presently manifested. She has had the opportunity to lead a variety of different schools in the role of a principal and as a district level teacher of principals, and has taken the opportunity to reflect on what works and what does not work in certain settings. Her experiences leading other schools and teaching principals in other schools also allow her to understand her own values about the kind of student she most wishes to impact and the setting of school that will most efficaciously serve those goals.

An Emergent and Applied Definition of a Leadership Practice

The definition of a leadership practice applied in this study includes the notions of the literature based practice that was constructed in order to measure, observe, and communicate about the leadership practice of a successful school serving high poverty ELA students. Three theoretical frameworks (the VAL-ED framework, ES-I framework,

and distributed leadership) offer a validated measurement, detailed descriptions of how previously measured specific leadership practices impact schools, and an insistent foundational inclusion of the particular context of the leadership practice.

The emergent and applied definition of a leadership practice is found to be consistent with literature based definitions. Also, the findings of this study imply the need to include tools and activities, proximal and distal goals, and the effects of critical life and work experiences to the definition of a leadership practice. The findings of this study imply that a complete and contextual description must include the elements that have been described above in order to more faithfully portray what leaders actually do in schools. Extending the theoretical frameworks that were gleaned from the literature with the components and elements revealed in this study more richly reveal leadership practices of principals in context.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is one of five thematic dissertations focused on the leadership practices being used by principals in successful schools serving ELA learners. The findings of this study contribute towards an understanding of how to positively impact academic achievement of ELA learners by identifying the leadership practices of principals already meeting that challenge. This chapter is organized into three sections: (a) a summary of this study, (b) a conclusions section that discusses the key findings of the study; how these findings support, refute, or extend relevant literature already cited in this study; and implications of those findings, and (c) recommendations for practice—for principals, school districts, and principal preparation programs—and for further research on leadership practices.

Summary of Study

For this study, a definition of leadership practice was developed from the literature. This definition was used as a theoretical framework to describe the leadership practice of a successful school leader of a school with high poverty, ELA populations. First, a validated measure (the VAL-ED matrix) was used to reveal the areas of principal leadership rated as most effective by the principal, the teachers, and the principal's supervisor. Then, the principal was interviewed in order for them to provide a rich description of their own leadership practices. A second interview was conducted in the form of a personal narrative wherein the successful school leader reflected upon how critical life and professional events that shaped their commitment and approach to school leadership. The interview manuscripts were coded and analyzed in order to interpret the

leadership practices of the study principal in comparison to the definitions provided by literature, to describe and contextualize a successful study principal's leadership practices with known leadership practices, and to uncover new leadership practices in the particular practice of the study school. It is the intent of the researchers to define contextualized leadership practices in order to support student achievement in urban schools that serve low income, ELA learners.

The five research questions that guided this study are:

1. Using the definition of a leadership practice as a guide (developed in chapter two), what are the specific and particularized leadership practices being used by the principal in this study to ensure a positive impact of that school on student growth/achievement?
2. How do the identified successful leadership practices align with key conceptual and evidence-based frameworks (VAL-ED Matrix and the Essential Supports & Indicators Framework) used in this study?
3. How do stories of this principal's critical incidents (both work and life related) contribute to an understanding of how self-identified leadership practices emerged and flourished within this particular school and community context?
4. What Essential Supports and Indicators related to relative success or failures in mathematics from the validated research of Bryk et al. (2010) are found in other schools conducting this research?
5. Based on a review of relevant literature (the conceptual underpinnings and evidenced-based strategies) and evidence gathered in this study, what is an emergent and applied definition of a leadership practice?

To guide the study, two specific evidence-based conceptual frameworks that examine leadership practices and behaviors linked to student outcomes were chosen. The first conceptual framework, the VAL-ED Matrix, comes from evidence-based research (Goldring et al. 2009). The second is The ES-I framework is built from five essential supports and fourteen indicators (Bryk et al. (2010). Both of these conceptual frameworks were used in the design of this study, the development of interview protocols, and to guide data analysis.

Schools were deemed eligible to participate as a “successful school” by meeting the following criteria: (a) an open enrollment policy, (b) at least 40% of total enrollment consisting of ELA students with a total of at least 100 ELA students (c) a total School Performance Framework (SPF) rating greater than 49% for elementary schools, and greater than 45% for middle schools and high schools, (d) at least 50% of the students qualify for a free or reduced lunch, (e) have gains on the CSAP and CELA tests for three consecutive years relative to schools serving the same grade levels and (f) a principal in place for at least three years.

While the subject of this case study was the principal identified as leading a successful school serving a number of ELA learners, the actual unit of analysis was the specific and particularized leadership practices exhibited by the principal. This leadership practice construct was derived from a literature review and the application to practice of two learner-centered leadership conceptual frameworks.

Three instruments were used to collect data for this study – the VAL-ED Survey, the Leadership Practice Interview Protocol, and the Narrative Inquiry Protocol. Based upon the results of the VAL-ED Survey, follow-up interviews were conducted with

directed questions in areas most highly rated by the principal, the principal's supervisor, and all the teachers in the building. The Narrative Inquiry Protocol was used to gather critical work and life experiences deemed by the principal to be central to their current leadership success and the development, implementation and maintenance of her leadership practices.

Data collected from VAL-ED resulted in mean and median effectiveness scores generated through the six-core components and six-key processes subscales. Interview data was transcribed and loaded into DeDoose, an online platform for analyzing text. Coding inventories created from the ES-I and VAL-ED Matrix were used to code results of the interview protocol in DeDoose. Data were analyzed and findings for each research question were generated.

Conclusions

This section lists and describes key findings from this study. Next, descriptions of how these findings are related (support, refute, or extend) to prior research findings reported in the literature review. Finally, implications drawn from these findings are revealed.

Summary of Key Findings

RQ-1: *Using the definition of a leadership practice as a guide (developed in chapter two), how are specific and particularized leadership practices being used by the principal in this study to ensure a positive impact of that school on student growth/achievement?*

The specific and particularized leadership practices used by the principal and the teachers at this school were highly responsive to the needs of the particular situation at

this school and are defined by her interactions with other leaders and followers in the school. Principal Daza's first mission was to help the school create a vision and to help individuals find their place within that vision. According to Principal Daza, this inclusive work took months, and even took into account student goals, but when complete was used to shape the organizational structures that provided for high levels of professional capacity. The work at Wade Smith K-8 became anchored in the vision of the school as it supported certain "*non-negotiables*" like the district UIP and improved achievement for ELA students. Once those distal goals were in place, every proximal goal and activity could be measured against its ability to move the school towards the ultimate goals. Goals were meticulously differentiated for each teacher and each situation, and were designed to support more ambitious, distal goals. The work of the principal through her leadership team and other school leaders and followers has become inextricable from the highly focused systems and subsystems that are in place to affect student achievement.

RQ-2: *How do the identified successful leadership practices align with key conceptual and evidence-based frameworks (VAL-ED Matrix and the Essential Supports & Indicators Framework) used in this study?*

The frequency count revealed that the data from the transcript aligned with the validated measures provided by the VAL-ED measurement and the ES-I framework and Principal Daza's leadership practice. The five most frequently cited examples of ES-I codes for the leadership practice found at Wade Smith K-8 School were from Professional Community, School leadership, Work Orientation, Student Centered Learning Environment, Professional Capacity, and Academic Support and Press. These practices were evidenced by a complex set of interdependent systems, processes and

relationships that were described by the principal. The findings of the VAL-ED assessment showed Principal Daza to be particularly strong in the key process of advocating, and the key component of quality instruction. The data from this study also provided numerous other examples of how Principal Daza supported, advocated, communicated and monitored her teachers in order to achieve improved professional capacity in delivering quality instruction.

The evidence from the VAL-ED assessment showed that not all of the key processes and components were evaluated highly for Principal Daza. However, through the interview process, it became evident that while some of the elements of VAL-ED Matrix and the ES-I Framework are operational at the school, these elements may not be part of the day-to-day interactions between the leaders and followers in the school. For example, at Wade Smith K-8 School, Principal Daza received relatively low ratings from all participants of the VAL-ED measure within the component of planning, but it is exceedingly observable that every activity is intentionally tethered to a goal, hence planning has obviously been a key process at some point during Principal Daza's tenure. Perhaps planning does not presently obviate itself as a defined element of this leadership practice because the planning took place during the past, or perhaps it is because all activities and tools remain flexible and responsive to assessment. Whatever the underlying reasons for the stealth of this key process, planning has certainly taken place since action is consistently goal oriented.

RQ-3: *How do stories of this principal's critical incidents (both work and life related) contribute to an understanding of how self-identified leadership practices emerged and flourished within this particular school and community context?*

A principal's story, or personal and professional narrative reveals how critical work and life experiences shaped her leadership practices, and why these leadership practices emerged and flourished within this particular school and community context. Both the form of the experience and the narrative itself revealed Principal Daza to be uniquely committed to her work. The main findings from the narrative interview include insights about how Principal Daza experiences her role as a leader of a school with high numbers of students who traditionally do not have access to powerful and expert formal educational experiences. Her strong desire to provide a high quality educational experience for her students is based on her personal convictions about equity in education.

Her professional experiences have also shaped her motivation and her capacity to serve the demographics of her school. Principal Daza has been the principal of other schools with differing student backgrounds. Her experiences in very elite and privileged schools only led her to a stronger conviction about providing equity for all students. Also, her ability to quickly assess and shape a school's culture originates from her training as a coach of principals.

RQ-4: *What Essential Supports and Indicators related to relative success or failure in mathematics from the validated research of Bryk et al. (2010) is found in the other schools conducting this research?*

Essential Supports and Indicators that are strongly related to success in mathematics are found across four successful schools serving high poverty English language learners. *School Leadership*, *Professional Community* and *Work Orientation* stand out as three areas that are both identified by the ES-I framework as necessary for

forward movement in math and are frequently occurring aspects of the leadership practices for the four schools in this study. Not only are these three element of the ES-I framework frequently occurring aspects of leadership practice, but they are the most frequently occurring aspects of leadership practice at all four schools. Further, no school recorded a complete absence of any ES-I that is strongly related to success in mathematics.

RQ-5: *Based on a review of relevant literature (the conceptual underpinnings and evidenced-based strategies) and evidence gathered in this study, what is an applied definition of a leadership practice?*

The key finding for this research question was that in addition to a leadership practice triangle (leader, followers, and situation), a work focus (in this study the content associated with the VAL-ED Matrix and ES-I Framework) and proximal goals additional elements emerged from data. These additional elements of a leadership practice include the introduction of specific tools used by the principals and other leadership figures in the schools. Activities that the principal sanctions, initiates, or personally leads, have resulted in the achievement of valued proximal goals. As members of the leadership practice triangle respond to the demands of the context, multiple proximal goals are achieved. This particular leadership practice values the frequent monitoring of proximal and distal goals. By design distal goals of a leadership practice are anchored in district goals or school vision. These elements plus those critical work and experiences that of a principal's story all come together in a principal's leadership practice. These additional elements are not characterized by distinct or individual parts, but rather are

part of a holistic, permeable; one might say living, emergent and applicable leadership practice.

Summary of Key Findings and Relationship to Literature

This study is grounded in the development of an applied leadership practice via the literature review found in Chapter II. The definition of leadership practice developed for this study drew from the following periods of literature (a) effective schools research, (b) direct and indirect effects of principal leadership, (c) instructional leadership, and early references to a leadership practice (Leadership Practice Inventory, High Performance—High Poverty research, and distributed leadership research) and the literature focused on leadership for learning (VAL-ED and the ES-I). Three additional areas of research have been mined to lay the foundation for understanding of the contexts of this study. They are: (a) leadership for ELA learners and (b) leadership for mathematics education for ELA learners, and (c) literature on using narrative inquiry methodology to explore work and life events of subjects.

The Effective Schools research began as a response to the 1966 Coleman Report—Equality of Educational Opportunity. Findings from that study raised the concern that the background and socioeconomic status of the student was more predictive of educational outcomes than differences in schools. The Coleman report was groundbreaking both in its rigorous use of student achievement as a measure of school success and as an alarm about the failure of our schools to educate certain segments of our population. The present study also utilizes student achievement as a measure of success and focuses on schools with high concentrations of students of color living in poverty.

In order to challenge the idea that student backgrounds predetermine academic success, subsequent researchers (Brookover & Lezotte, 1978; Edmonds, 1979; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Reynolds, Hargreaves & Blackstone, 1980; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore & Ouston, 1979) sought to prove that schools do matter for student achievement. Collectively, this effort became known as the Effective Schools Research movement. The goal was to provide a contradictory view by describing schools that serve poor students yet were successful while continuing to use student achievement as a measure of school success. Edmonds (1979) listed characteristics of successful schools that included such things as routines and provisions for student safety. He also noted that strong leadership was a necessary element for successful schools. While the beginning work of identifying characteristics for successful schools depended more upon listing characteristics of schools and feel short of describing leadership practice, the present study owes its overall focus to Effective Schools research studies in that it is interested in successful schools in particular and difficult contexts.

The next body of research relevant to this study was research on the direct and indirect effects of principals on student achievement which started with the realization that the role of the school leader is pivotal but poorly understood set the stage for more specific investigations about how the role of school principals affect student achievement (Beck & Murphy, 1998, Gurr-Mark, Drysdale-George & Mulford, 2010, Hallinger & Murphey, 1985; Hallinger, Bickman & Davis, 1996; Heck, Marcoulides & Lang, 1991, Nettles & Herrington, 2007, Ross & Gray, 2006). This body of research began to deconstruct the complex nature of principal interactions, such as how principals work through others so that those interactions might be observed, measured, and evaluated.

The notion of how principals work through others was found to be essential in understanding the complete impact of a principal's behavior and provided reason to study the complex, context embedded, and sometimes ambiguous role of the principal.

Taken together, the direct and indirect effects of principals on student achievement are potent and account for $\frac{1}{4}$ of total school effects (Waters, Marzano & McNulty, 2003). Importantly, leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most such as in schools that are in more difficult circumstances. In these schools, the effects of leadership on student learning is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school. Informed by this body of work, a team of researchers from Vanderbilt (Hallinger, Bickman & Davis, 1996) began to explore the nature and context of principal effects on student achievement in order to determine how context embedded roles and behaviors might be measureable.

Our definition of a *leadership practice* draws from this body of research in many ways. Like the work of the Direct and Indirect Effects researchers, my study acknowledges the complexity of leadership behaviors. However, this study's definition of leadership practice necessitated moving beyond the behavior focus of the Direct and Indirect researchers to a framework that more suitably represents how a diverse array of activities can describe a system of practice. That is, the present research does not seek to offer a list of behaviors, but rather overlays sets of interactions and diverse behaviors with a framework from which to describe the practice.

The next important line of research focused on instructional leadership. Since effective school research established that schools do make a difference and the direct and

indirect studies confirmed that school leaders are at the helm of that effort, the next step in defining how to move schools towards success was to define what kind of things effective leaders do that are important. This line of research on instructional leadership grew with an assemblage of data that the principal ought to care about instruction in the school. Since the obligations of the principal are vast, instructional leadership research seeks to describe how successful principals prioritize to manifest their most important goal, that of keeping the focus on and supporting instruction (Finkel, 2012; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Smith, & Andrews, 1989).

One product of instructional leadership became identifying the most vital leadership behaviors out of the many behaviors that actually support instruction. Several researchers then provided prototypical structures and lists of principal behaviors. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) conducted a review and meta-analysis of leadership behaviors and how they affect student achievement.

The next investigation became how to accomplish this feat since it is impossible for the principal to be an expert in every subject area (Copeland, 2001; Finkel, 2012; Fulmer, 2006, Smith & Andrews, 1989). Instructional leadership research then began to acknowledge that school leadership must be accomplished through a community of professionals who are invested in the same values and vision of the school (Blase & Blase, 2005; Cotton, 2003; Sheppard, 1996). An awareness began about the principal's role as the school's moral center, the lead in enlisting and encouraging other professionals in order to manifest the vision of the school.

This study owes much to this body of research since Instructional Leadership seeks to understand and to describe which leadership practices affect student

achievement, and how the responsibilities of leaders include both the culture of the school and relationships to subordinates and to other leaders in the school. This precursor work both narrows the definition of which leadership behaviors are pertinent to student achievement (those affecting instruction), and broadens the arena within which those practices might be found.

The following paragraphs describe three key early references defining a leadership practice construct. The first of these is the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The second section provides a description of the Readiness Model from the High Performance–High Poverty (HP-HP) literature. The third section is a review of the ideas related to distributed leadership.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) reviewed 25 years of research on models of leadership behaviors, and then identified five leadership practices of exemplary leadership that reflect practices and commitments of leaders. These researchers' Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI) (2007) is a 360-degree survey and assessment of leadership behaviors wherein the test subject and others in the work relationship with the subject complete the survey. The LPI is based on the research reported in the book *The Leadership Challenge: How to Keep Getting Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations* (Kouzes & Posner, 1995).

The LPI informs educational assessments that evaluate the effective leadership practices of building level school leaders although it is not specifically designed for the particular issues of school leadership. Also, it provides baseline information about what constitutes a leadership practice. Kouzes & Posner (1995) provide a basis for extension into a more sophisticated leadership practice assessment as it offers a validated 360-

degree measure of leadership practice within the context of relationships with others at the school. This study extends their work by defining a leadership practice for schools and designing a study to observe and measure it.

The next line of research important to this study was the HP-HP research in which researchers provide evidence that some schools succeed in spite of discouraging correlation between high poverty and chronic under-performance for schools (Calkins, Genter, Belfore, and Lash, 2007, Orfield & Lee, 2005, Rumberger & Palardy, 2005). However, because school performance varies at every income level and exceptions to this correlation to occur, researchers set out to define how high-performing, high-poverty (HPHP) schools achieved good results. The model that describes these extraordinary schools is called the Readiness Model (Calkins et al., 2007) where education depends entirely on the readiness of the system to teach, learn and act effectively. These HP-HP studies define a holistic framework that extends beyond the learner and the family to the readiness of the school (Halle, Zaff, Calkins, & Geyelin, 2000; Kagan, Moore & Bradekamp, 1995). The framework is not prescriptive, but encourages awareness on areas of importance for the school that are broad and responsive to the needs and special environment of the school in relationship to the students.

The frameworks of my study merge with the framework of HP-HP research, yet go further in seeking to define a leadership practice and find evidence of such in practice. HP-HP research offers a newer and more advanced version of the school effectiveness research, but much more nuanced, and it supports the search in this study for an applicable definition of the construct of a leadership practice.

Finally, the idea of Distributed Leadership is presented by Spillane (2005) as a theoretical framework that is concerned with what happens between leaders and followers. As a framework, it can be thought of as a point of view from which to analyze leadership and is orientated towards a property that emerges from a group of interacting individuals leads to a goal (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001, 2004). Distributed leadership is especially relevant to school leadership and emphasizes the fact that in a school setting, many individuals may contribute their expertise to a leadership effort in any situation (2006).

From the perspective of Distributed Leadership, Spillane and Diamond (2007) claim it insufficient to study leadership by observing the leader; the focus must be on contextualized interactions with others. A Distributed Leadership focus acknowledges how the school staff interacts in order to fulfill the many responsibilities of managing and leading a school. The final requisite element of a distributed leadership practice is the situation, or context, of the work. Especially in schools, circumstances define the work so completely, that a discussion about leadership must include the many aspects of context.

Within this triad of leaders, followers, and situation, the distributed leadership framework provides an avant-garde model with an emphasis upon dynamic, empowering interactions between individuals rather than a parceling or partitioning of duties. Distributed leadership practice may be thought of as both “a conceptual and analytic framework for studying leadership interaction” (Harris, 2010, p. 4) as it promotes both a fuller conception of leadership in schools and provides a tool for diagnosing the essence of leadership practice, that it, the study of leaders in action.

This current study incorporated distributed leadership to define the conceptual framework of leadership practice that was applied to the context of this school. Findings from my study were used to expand our definition of a leadership practice by identifying the important of *defining a work focus*, using *activities* and *tools*, to reach proximal goals for the protagonists within the leadership triangle. This study is aligned with and informed by Distributed Leadership, and the framework utilized here expands upon it.

Finally, two state of the art and validated conceptual frameworks were selected for this study (VAL-ED and the ES-I framework) help to define a leadership practice construct. The VAL-ED matrix was selected for use in this study for three purposes. First, it provides a description of an evidenced based and validated measure of leadership behaviors. Second, it allows the researcher to shape the interview process around the most cogent behaviors found in the VAL-ED survey. Third, the framework provides support for the development of the construct of a leadership practice—a response to the first research question of this study. The VAL-ED Matrix (shown previously in Figure 1 in Chapter One, p. 8) is composed of six core components and six key processes identified from research on learner-centered leadership (Goldring et al., 2009). The matrix illustrates 36 areas that are formed by the intersection of components and processes that become the actual focal points of the leadership practice (leaders, followers, and the situation). The six-core components that make up this matrix are linked to teachers’ opportunities to improve their instruction and student learning and the processes through which the school leaders leverage core components. The six-core components of leadership are high standards for student learning, rigorous curriculum, quality instruction, culture of learning and professional behavior, connections to external

communities performance, and accountability. The six key-processes of the VAL-ED matrix represent the processes by which each of the core components, or focal points for principal's leadership practices, is executed. Planning, implementing, supporting, advocacy, communicating, and monitoring are necessary processes for accomplishment of all core components. The VAL-ED matrix identifies and measures each of these processes as they are described in relationship to core components.

The second important framework was drawn from the work of Bryk et al. (2010) and for this study was deemed the Essential Supports and Indicators (ES-I) framework. This framework is drawn from research establishing leadership as the driver for school improvement and is based on a decade of research on Chicago schools that achieved academic success in spite of existing within high-poverty and high-need communities. A schema of this framework is shown previously in Figure 2 in Chapter One (p. 11).

The reform effort targeting Chicago's low performing, poor, urban schools, found the quality of the principal's leadership to be the critical factor in determining whether the school is able to create and maintain an academic turnaround (Seabring & Bryk, 2000). Specific strategies, such as attacking and solving highly visible problems, were called out, but these eventually led to a coherent message about leadership and community trust, focus on the instructional core, and inclusive/facilitative style leadership. Bryk et al. (2010, p. 49) developed a conceptual framework from five essential supports that affect student achievement and positive school change. They include the following: (a) leadership as the driver for change, (b) professional capacity, (c) the school learning climate, (d) parent, school, community ties/community relations, and (e) instructional guidance. These five supports are called essential because each must

be present for the others to function. In addition to these essential supports, these authors also found fourteen indicators of the five essential supports (referenced in Chapter II).

For our conceptual framework, we aligned both of these frameworks to create a coding tool and paired that coding tool with the leadership practice framework of distributed leadership. Taken together, the three frameworks provide a strong evidenced-based framework that focuses on the work of learner-centered leadership and the role of leaders as drivers of school improvement. This framework is firmly rooted in context, focused on leadership as the driver, and also offers examples of indicators that are related to student achievement in core subject areas. While this study is informed by literature that leads up to more comprehensive definitions leadership practice, further explication is provided by the frameworks of the Distributed Leadership model (Spillane et al., 2004), the VAL-ED Matrix (Goldring, 2009) and the ES-I framework of Bryk et al. (2010). These conceptual frameworks are both complimentary and mutually supportive, and are used here to present a more complete definition of leadership practice.

This current study extended this research by first defining the construct of a leadership practice and then findings examples in practice. This study's findings describing the leadership practice of a successful principal in a high poverty urban school with ELA learners took place within the guidelines provided by the frameworks for leadership practices cited above. That is, the frameworks found in relevant literature for provided the window through which this study both described and analyzed the leadership practice. Further, because the leadership practices are unique to each location of this thematic study, the frameworks proved indispensable in organizing the complex and abundant examples of activities and goals that the leaders were able to self identify.

In coding and organizing the data, these activities were found to align with elements of either the Distributed Leadership model (Spillane et al., 2004), the VAL-ED Matrix (Goldring, 2009) or the ES-I framework of Bryk et al. (2010) in such a way that a coherent picture was developed of previously confusingly complex offerings. In fact, the principal was often unable to articulate their leadership practice from beginning to end, and the frameworks were required for a complete and ordered interpretation thereof.

The next area of literature important to this study was research on leadership for ELA students. One area of leadership for ELA students has focused upon instruction. There are a variety of successful methods employed to positively affect instruction for ELA students (Echevarria, Vogt, and Short, 2008, Freeman and Freeman, 2002, Garcia, 1991, Gay, 2000, Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti 2005, Lochmiller, Huggins & Acker-Hocevar, 2012, Ruiz-de-Velasco, Chu, and Clewell 2000, Walsh 1999).

Researchers also emphasize important areas beyond instructional style whereby building level leadership affects how ELA-learners are served in schools including equity and placement issues (Oakes, 1985, Kosteci & Bers, 2009, Ruiz-de-Velasco, Chu & Clewell, 2000). Providing time for teachers to work and plan collaboratively is also a building-level decision that has shown promise as a way to improve collegiality and responsiveness to the particular learning issues of ELA students (Fullan, 2007; Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson & Jinks, 2007; Walsh, 1999).

The High Poverty High Performance (HPHP) research of Calkins, Guenther, Belfiore, and Lash, (2007) catalogs how the culture of successful schools provide intense commitment to shared responsibility for learning and an urgency about goal achievement. Within this philosophy, language and extraordinary personal circumstances are not to be

used by faculty or students as an excuse for not learning. This insistence upon success was introduced by Reeves (2000) as the driving philosophy in the concept he named the 90/90/90 school wherein a school serving a population of students who are more than 90 percent eligible for free and reduced lunch, more than 90 percent ethnic minorities, and more than 90 percent meeting or exceeding high academic standards according to sanctioned tests of academic achievement. The goal of becoming a 90/90/90 school was specifically named by the principal in this study.

The final body of literature important to this study was research focused on Leadership for Mathematics Achievement. From the point of view of instructional leadership, math achievement is the concern of the school principal as much as it is the classroom instructor. One example of how relevant research describes leadership practice within the content focus of a leadership practice that includes mathematics can be found in the VAL-ED matrix (Goldring, 2009). How the principal plans for, implements and supports a rigorous mathematics curriculum is described as the content focus of a leadership practice (leaders, followers, situations) that supports mathematics achievement for students in the school of interest. Selective placement practices often situate ELA learners in an inflexible curriculum, especially in mathematics, where they find themselves diverted into a series of courses that neither prepares them for higher education nor for lucrative positions in the workforce (Oakes, 1985). Teacher professional development has also been a targeted area of interest in seeking improved response of ELA students to mathematics and STEM instruction (Buczynski & Hansen, 2010). Emerging mathematics leadership data suggests specific knowledge and content competencies—those related to K-12 mathematics curriculum design, analysis,

implementation, and evaluation are important as principals shape their leadership roles for mathematics (Cummings, 2011). In the case of the study school, implementation of the rigorous mathematics curriculum included ensuring that existing staff received support via both a subject area coach and planning time; both describable within the VAL-ED matrix.

The Bryk et al. (2010) framework of essential supports and indicators describes a leadership practice that supports mathematics achievement for students in schools of interest similar to the manner in which the VAL-ED matrix is used. For example, how the principal plans for, implements and supports a rigorous mathematics curriculum aligns with the Bryk et al. (2010) essential support called instructional guidance. Using the example of how a school leader would plan for a rigorous mathematics curriculum engages what Bryk et al. (2010) calls instruction leadership which is manifest when the principal sets high standards and exercises leadership for instructional reform.

Finally, the Distributed Leadership framework (Spillane et al., 2004) is also evidenced to be specifically beneficial in the area of specific and particularized leadership practices that support ELA learners in mathematics. For example, Carrejo and Cortez (2010) suggest that principals can impact STEM related achievement of students by changing their leadership style from supervisory to more supportive, shared leadership style modeled after *communities of practice* and *transformational leadership*.

The literature on narrative inquiry provides a method by which a researcher may humanize a description of events (Bell, 2002, Connelly & Clandinin, 2009), and in this study, the narrative inquiry interview is the primary means by which each school leader provided their personal reflections about their experience as leaders. The primary

mechanism to express humans experience is through stories, and the narrative, therefore, provides a means by which the protagonist may articulate the window through which they view the world (Merriam, 2009). This view has special significance in education and the social sciences as both of these disciplines might be viewed from the point of view of construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 2009). This methodology was successful in this study to identify critical work and life events that support the creation, implementation, and maintenance of leadership practices.

Discussion and Implications of Findings

The overarching implication of this study is that leadership practice is unique and must be described within its particular setting, and is everything that is aimed towards the goals of the school, whether successful or not. The leaders in this study were sometimes not able to self describe their own leadership practice because it exhibits such a responsiveness to every interaction that it became diaphanous and highly influenced by different situations. Therefore, a leadership practice can be described only in practice, since it refers to activities tied to the work at hand and is not fixed. A leadership practice is also idiosyncratic; one size does not fit all. The implication is that each piece will be different for all cases and will change with time. The following recommendations are based in the above statements.

1. The existence of these leadership practices imply a body of knowledge that can be used as a model for shaping future school leaders. For example, specific contextual examples of how certain proximal goals lead to more distal goals can be explored and shared between future and present leaders.

2. Because alignment does exist between the literature, validated measurement, and leadership practices, the alignment tools (VAL-ED Assessment of Leadership test and ES-I Framework) can be used as a structure for learning about leadership in a variety of contexts. Talking about leadership practice is too broad and context dependent to provide lists of activities. Larger, theoretical frameworks provide evidence-based ways to describe how leaders impact kids and schools. The theoretical frameworks are important for describing leadership practices that have emerged from decades of research about what works in schools, so it can provide a baseline of information.

3. Findings from the narrative interview of Principal Daza imply that each individual's story will be unique, but will provide meaning and understanding for their particular motivations for creating, implementing and maintaining a particular leadership practice. The extraordinary nature of Principal Daza's story supports the notion that personal points of view may impact efficacy with high poverty ELA students. The implication of how personal meaning is construed invites leaders to explore their own motives.

4. Because identified Essential Supports and Indicators that are strongly related to success in mathematics are found across four successful schools serving high poverty English language learners, generalizations might be made about the stability of these ES-I cases. The low frequency of two of the ES-I framework items could suggest that as professional practice evolves, the leadership practice that seeks to affect professional and instructional practice may also change. For example, the fact that the ES-I framework item for curricular alignment was infrequently cited in the principal interview data only implies that curricular alignment does not frequently occur at the building level for any of

the study schools. This may be explained by the increased level of alignment for curriculum and standards at the national level. This reinforces the notion of the responsive leadership practice. That is, as national work begins on curriculum alignment and common core standards, valuable building level resources are not spent on replicating the work.

5. The additional concepts revealed from the situation specific study of an applied definition of leadership practice within the context of successful schools serving high poverty ELA students add to insights and understandings about the nature of leadership for these schools. Specifically, tools and activities found within the work orientation of the leadership practice and are used to achieve proximal goals, which then lead to more lofty and distal goals.

Recommendations for Practice

This study has specifically investigated the role of successful urban school leadership for ELA learners and as a result, has direct applications for principals, school districts, and principal preparation programs. Each of these recommendations is described below. This section also lists suggestions for future research studies on the leadership-practice construct. Specific recommendations for practice from this study are included below for each subcategory: principals, school districts, and principal preparation programs.

Recommendations for Principals

Leaders who practice in buildings that serve diverse students, but especially in schools that serve demographics of students aligning with those in this study, would benefit from the application of several of the elements suggested by Principal Daza's

leadership practice. The following suggestions were gleaned from the results of this study and stand out as worthy of consideration both because of their central role in the described successful leadership practice and how they are supported by the theoretical frameworks that form the foundation of this study. These recommendations are made with consideration of their cost-effectiveness, accessibility, their relative independence from outside support, and their sustainability. However, the primary rationale for each of these recommendations is to support and enhance the development of a leadership practice that may be applicable for leaders of schools that serve high poverty ELA students.

1. Create a vision aligned with distal goals, but with consideration of all stakeholders first.
2. Organize leadership teams for assessment, support, and professional development opportunities.
3. Clearly articulate distal goals aligned with vision.
4. Seek out and apply activities that will support proximal goal setting and achievement.
5. Assess progress towards proximal goals in order to celebrate success, recalibrate efforts, and challenge inhibitors.
6. Attend to well being of student culture through disciplinary methods, communication to parents, alignment with community needs, access to needed resources.
7. Publicly acknowledge other school leaders and act to support their professional development and forward movement.

8. Remain consistent, professional and vigilant in application of all practices.

Recommendations for School Districts

The results of this study imply a variety of services, supports, and opportunities that school districts can provide to their building-level leaders that would enhance a principal's ability to develop an efficacious leadership practice. These suggestions are derived from experiences explicitly named and credited by this study's successful principal as being a pivotal professional experience. For example, during the narrative interview with Principal Daza, she credited her ability to quickly assess and affect school culture with a past position wherein she coached principals about their school's culture. This background is unique to Principal Daza and allows her to respond to changes in the culture of her school because of changing demographics or changes in staff and implies the usefulness in providing like training to other principals. Also stated here are implied findings that were not specifically called out, but were evidenced by the leadership practice of the successful principal of this study.

1. Provide professional development for principals related to building a leadership practice, assessing and development of the culture school trust.
2. Encourage the establishment collegial discourse about practice-based leadership so that principals with like issues can visit, meet with, and collectively solve common issues.
3. Provide tools for building level leaders (like the LEAP framework, UIP goals, data support for interpreting and aligning assessments), so that principals don't have to spend their own time creating them.

4. Acknowledge that leadership practice is unique and should be measured via progress towards goals rather than lockstep compliance to a norm.
5. Shift funding, expertise, and other resources to support schools with special needs.
6. Provide district support for building level management functions so that leadership may focus on instruction and student achievement.

Recommendations for Principal Preparation Programs

The professional-learning implications of this study are many. For those whose work involves developing school leaders, the study of successful leadership practice can be used to create a more cohesive set of policies and initiatives to improve instructional leadership in schools. Study findings imply that team focused leadership practices (distributed leadership) support success on many fronts. It follows then that specific instruction and practice about the theoretical constructs and applied practice of distributed leadership appear to be a promising approach for developing school leaders engaged in improving instruction. These efforts may be achieved through:

1. Provide training for understanding and development of leadership practices and how they are responsive to particular settings,
2. Advocate for policies and initiatives that support instructional leadership in schools,
3. Seek out opportunities for candidates to synthesize and apply leadership practices,

4. Provide opportunities via readings, video viewings, written situational examples or real life observations to explore differences between leadership practices in different contexts.

Recommendations for Research

In order to support a deeper understanding of leadership practice in successful schools for ELA learners, it is necessary to continue to describe successful models of leadership practice. Continued descriptions of leadership practices will have several benefits including richer and more varied descriptions and a growing expertise in identifying and describing leadership practices. Also, examining different cases can begin to offer generalizations based on cross-case analysis. The greater the number of cases studied, the more compelling is the argument that observed and recorded patterns are validly interpreted.

The analysis of many descriptions of leadership practice (both strong and weak) would help in understanding the quality of leadership practices. , and would help discover how a principal's leadership practice change over time, and how experienced principals adjust their practice to different situations. A variety of confounding issues might be addressed such as how other data correlates to principal leadership data (such as teacher turn over, teacher satisfaction, etc.). Also, as predicted by the theoretical frameworks of this study, since leadership practices are responsive to their environment, and since that environment will continue to change, leadership practices will continue to evolve over time. It will be necessary to continue to describe successful leadership practices for nascent leaders as they are trained. The following items contain specific

recommendations for research that are meant to provide deeper understanding of leadership practice.

1. Continue observations of leadership practices for continued and richer, more varied descriptions.
2. Continue investigating leadership practices in a variety of contexts .
3. Continue observations of leadership practices for cross-case analysis and generalizing suggestions.
4. Continue observations of leadership practices to improve data analysis and validity.
5. Compare other forms of leadership data (e.g., teacher turnover, teacher satisfaction, community support) to various leadership-practice profiles.
6. Continue to redefine evolving leadership practices because the nature of a leadership practice is responsive. Therefore, changing circumstances will create new challenges.

Final Thoughts

Distributed leadership declares that effective leadership does not stem from a potent personality with individual efficacy. It's about the collective efficacy of many working towards a common goal. A key question for me is how to support the notion of multiple leaders in a school and about how to best unleash or empower other potential school leaders within the context of a school. What are the specific tools and resources that are applied to make a more productive and distributed leadership practice thrive in a school setting?

A second question includes how this research can tell us more about both the potential and the limits of shared leadership. That is, how does a strong leader with personal commitment (like that described in the narrative) interact with the distributed leadership model? For example, while Principal Daza utilizes distributed leadership, she has an extraordinary commitment to equity in education. However, even in the extremely distributed network of the Wade Smith School, Principal Daza maintains ultimate authority for directing the school and answering to district level administrators. In contexts like this, when do effective leaders utilize distributed leadership and when does consultation with others end? Principal Daza appears to walk the line between the possible chaos of Distributed Leadership and a place of ultimate control with tools such as the *non-negotiables* with which she anchors her work. Is this so for other distributed leaders?

My own goals include deepening the understanding of a leadership practice via my own work as a school leader, and through sharing the information via professional development that I engage in. I intend to write, speak and model a leadership practice that impacts as many students and other professionals as possible.

APPENDIX A VAL-ED SURVEY

High Standards for Student Learning

Completed: 0 of 12

How effective am I at ensuring the school...

	Sources of Evidence <small>Check Key Sources of Evidence</small>						Effectiveness Rating <small>Choose one to indicate level of effectiveness or check "Don't Know"</small>					
	Reports From Others	Personal Observation	School Documents	School Projects or Activities	Other Sources	No Evidence	Ineffective	Minimally Effective	Satisfactorily Effective	Highly Effective	Outstandingly Effective	Don't Know
Planning												
develops a plan for high standards of student performance that are measurable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
plans for rigorous academic and social learning goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
coordinates tasks and resources to meet high standards for student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
recruits highly qualified faculty to meet performance goals for both academic and social learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
supports faculty in helping students reach high standards of learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting												
creates conditions that help faculty and students reach ambitious learning targets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
advocates for students with special needs when making decisions about high standards for student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
challenges low expectations for students at risk of failure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Advocating												
discusses information with faculty on progress toward achieving school goals and student learning targets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
discusses school goals for student learning with faculty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating												
uses data from multiple sources to monitor student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
uses data to evaluate students' behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring												

Completed: 0 of 12

<div><div><div>Rigorous Curriculum</div><div>Completed: 0 of 12</div></div></div>		<div>Sources of Evidence</div> <div>Check Key Sources of Evidence</div>						<div>Effectiveness Rating</div> <div>Choose one to indicate level of effectiveness or check "Don't Know"</div>								
<div>How effective am I at ensuring the school...</div> <div>plans curriculum to maximize student opportunity to learn essential knowledge and skills.</div> <div>develops a rigorous curriculum for students with special needs.</div> <div>implements a rigorous curriculum in programs for students with special needs.</div> <div>coordinates a rigorous curriculum across grade levels.</div> <div>supports participation in professional development that deepens teachers' understanding of a rigorous curriculum.</div> <div>provides teachers with time to work on developing and strengthening the curricular program.</div> <div>advocates that all programs for students with special needs deliver a rigorous curriculum.</div> <div>promotes the importance of a rigorous curriculum to students of all ability levels.</div> <div>discusses during faculty meetings how to improve the rigor of the curriculum.</div> <div>listens to faculty about how to strengthen the curriculum.</div> <div>uses disaggregated student achievement data to monitor the rigor of all curriculum programs.</div> <div>monitors the curriculum through frequent visits to classes.</div>		Reports From Others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ineffective	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>	
		Personal Observation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minimally Effective	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
		School Documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Satisfactorilly Effective	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
		School Projects or Activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Highly Effective	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
		Other Sources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outstandingly Effective	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
		No Evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring	Communicating	Advocating	Supporting	Implementing	Planning											

Completed: 0 of 12

plans faculty hiring policies with a focus on effective instructional practices.

plans opportunities for teachers to improve their instruction through professional development.

implements a mentoring program for new teachers focused on effective instructional practices.

implements procedures to protect instructional time.

allocates instructional resources to maximize the quality of instruction.

secures resources necessary to deliver high quality instruction.

challenges the community to provide additional instructional resources.

advocates additional instructional opportunities for students most in need.

communicates feedback to teachers about their instruction.

discusses instructional practices with faculty.

uses data to monitor the quality of instruction.

observes each teacher's instructional practices routinely to provide feedback.

Reports From Others
Personal Observation
School Documents
School Projects or Activities
Other Sources
No Evidence

<input type="radio"/>	Ineffective
<input type="radio"/>	Minimally Effective
<input type="radio"/>	Satisfactorily Effective
<input type="radio"/>	Highly Effective
<input type="radio"/>	Outstandingly Effective
<input type="radio"/>	Don't Know

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Culture of Learning & Professional Behavior

Completed: 0 of 12

How effective am I at ensuring the school...

		Sources of Evidence Check Key Sources of Evidence						Effectiveness Rating Choose one to indicate level of effectiveness or check "Don't Know"					
		Reports From Others	Personal Observation	School Documents	School Projects or Activities	Other Sources	No Evidence	Ineffective	Minimally Effective	Satisfactorilly Effective	Highly Effective	Outstandingly Effective	Don't Know
Planning	plans strategies to develop shared beliefs about professional practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	plans for a culture of shared responsibility for the social and academic learning of students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Implementing	builds a culture of continuous improvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	builds a school environment that is safe and orderly for all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting	provides a positive environment in which student learning is the central focus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	encourages collaboration among faculty that creates a culture of learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Advocating	recognizes the contributions of diverse students when developing school culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	promotes teacher behavior that is respectful of the diverse backgrounds of students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating	communicates with students about the aspects of a positive culture focused on learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	communicates with teachers about the aspects of a positive school environment focused on student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring	monitors the school culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	evaluates teachers' behaviors when monitoring the culture of learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>

Completed: 0 of 12

plans for the use of external community resources to promote academic and social learning goals.

builds a positive, open relationship with the community.

implements programs to help parents assist their children to be successful in school.

supports teachers to work with community agencies on behalf of students.

motivates teachers to be responsive to all families.

advocates for students in need of special services with the external community.

advocates for social services needed by students and families.

discusses the results of student achievement tests with parents.

listens to families regarding the social and academic learning of their children.

analyzes data about parental involvement.

evaluates the effectiveness of its partnerships with the community in advancing academic and social learning.

Sources in Evidence												Check Key Sources of Evidence
Reports From Others												
Personal Observation												
School Documents												
School Projects or Activities												
Other Sources												
No Evidence												
Effectiveness Rating												Choose one to indicate level of effectiveness or check "Don't Know"
Ineffective												
Minimally Effective												
Satisfactorily Effective												
Highly Effective												
Outstandingly Effective												
Don't Know												

Performance Accountability

Completed: 0 of 12

How effective am I at ensuring the school...

		Sources of Evidence Check Key Sources of Evidence						Effectiveness Rating Choose one to indicate level of effectiveness or check "Don't Know"					
		Reports From Others	Personal Observation	School Documents	School Projects or Activities	Other Sources	No Evidence	Ineffective	Minimally Effective	Satisfactorilly Effective	Highly Effective	Outstandingly Effective	Don't Know
Planning	develops a plan that holds teachers accountable for having positive relationships with students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	plans data collection to hold students accountable for academic and social learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Implementing	implements programs and practices to hold faculty accountable to reach the highest levels of performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	implements programs and practices that hold the school accountable to families for the learning of their children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting	provides expertise to make decisions about holding students accountable for their learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	provides procedures that hold students accountable for their learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Advocating	advocates for shared accountability by faculty for student academic and social learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	promotes an accountability system that represents the diverse views of families and the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating	communicates to families the purpose and nature of its accountability programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	communicates with faculty the purpose and nature of its accountability programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
Monitoring	analyzes the influence of student accountability on achieving high standards of academic learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>
	analyzes the influence of faculty evaluations on student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5	<input type="radio"/>

APPENDIX B

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Core Component: High Standards for Student Learning and All Key Processes

You [name of principal] were scored at a high level in the area of ***High Standards for Student Learning*** on the VAL-ED Survey. I am trying to identify specific and particularized leadership practices that you may be using to have earned this rating on this 360-degree evaluation from self, your supervisor and the teachers in this school. I would like to ask you some questions about this area and will be interested in hearing your responses about the leadership practices that you have in place for ***planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring*** school activities that are related to the area of achieving ***High Standards for Student Learning*** (individual, team, and school goals for rigorous academic and social learning).

Starter Question: What does it mean to have ***High Standards for Student Learning*** at this school?

1. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** for (a) rigorous growth targets in learning for all students, and (b) targets of faculty performance that emphasize improvement in student learning, in order to achieve ***High Standards for Student Learning*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: HS-P]
 - **IG-CA [Instructional Guidance—Curriculum Alignment]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that that this school ***plans*** for ***instructional guidance*** (subject matter students study across grades) with a ***curricular alignment*** (pacing and subject matter demand by grades) focus to achieving ***High Standards for Student Learning*** already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school plans for ***instructional guidance*** (subject matter students study across grades) with an ***application emphasis*** (active student applications emphasis) that results in achieving ***High Standards for Student Learning*** already prevalent in this school?
2. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***implements*** (a) (creates) buy-in among faculty for actions required to promote high standards of learning, (b) (creates) expectations that faculty maintain high standards for student learning, in order to achieve ***High Standards for Student Learning*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: HS-I]
 - **IG-CA [Instructional Guidance—Curriculum Alignment]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***implements*** ***instructional guidance***

(subject matter students study across grades) with a *curricular alignment* (pacing and subject matter demand by grades) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?

- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?
3. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* (a) (encourages) students to successfully achieve rigorous goals for student learning, and (b) teachers in meeting school goals, in order to achieve *High Standards for Student Learning* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: HS-S]
- **IG-CA [Instructional Guidance—Curriculum Alignment]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a *curricular alignment* (pacing and subject matter demand by grades) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?
 - **SCLC-AS&P [Student Centered Learning Climate—Academic Support & Press]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports a student centered learning climate* with *academic support & press* (press for academic achievement in their classrooms, classroom personalism, classroom behavior, academic engagement, peer support for academic work) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?
4. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* (a) for high standards for student learning when writing and implementing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), (b) (challenges) low expectations for special needs students, in order to achieve *High Standards for Student Learning* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: HS-A]
- **IG-CA [Instructional Guidance—Curriculum Alignment]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a *curricular alignment*

(pacing and subject matter demand by grades) focus for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?

- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?
5. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* (a) rigorous goals for student learning to faculty, and (b) with families and the community about goals for rigorous student learning, in order to achieve *High Standards for Student Learning* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: HS-C]
- **IG-CA: [Instructional Guidance—Curriculum Alignment]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a *curricular alignment* (pacing and subject matter demand by grades) focus for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?
6. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* (a) student learning again high standards of achievement, and (b) disaggregated test results, in order to achieve *High Standards for Student Learning* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: HS-M]
- **IG-CA [Instructional Guidance—Curriculum Alignment]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with *curricular alignment* (pacing and subject matter demand by grades) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *High Standards for Student Learning* already prevalent in this school?

Other Possible Prompts/Follow Up Questions for any of the questions above:

1. What did that look like?
2. Why did it work?
3. Who else was involved?
4. What else happened as a result?
5. What else can you add?
6. Why did you try this strategy?
7. What made you think this would be successful?
8. How did this interview process make you think differently about your leadership practices?
9. What else should I have asked you about why you were scored high on *High Standards for Student Learning*?

Core Component: Rigorous Curriculum—Content and All Key Processes

You [name of principal] were scored at a high level in the area of ***Rigorous Curriculum—Content*** on the VAL-ED Survey. I am trying to identify specific and particularized leadership practices that you may be using to have earned this rating on this 360-degree evaluation from self, your supervisor and the teachers in this school. I would like to ask you some questions about this area and will be interested in hearing your responses about the leadership practices that you have in place for ***planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring*** school activities that are related to the area of achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum—Content*** (ambitious academic content provided to all students in core academic subjects).

Starter Question: What does it mean to have ***Rigorous Curriculum—Content*** at this school?

1. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** (a) to develop a rigorous curriculum for all students, and (b) access to rigorous curricula for students with special needs, in order to achieve ***Rigorous Curriculum—Content*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: RC-P]
 - **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** for ***instructional guidance*** (subject matter students study across grades) with an ***application emphasis*** (active student applications emphasis) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SCLC-AS&P [Student Centered Learning Climate—Academic Support & Press]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** a ***student centered learning climate*** with ***academic support & press*** (press for academic achievement in their classrooms, classroom personalism, classroom behavior,

academic engagement, peer support for academic work) for achieving **Rigorous Curriculum – Content** already prevalent in this school?

- **IG-CA [Instructional Guidance—Curriculum Alignment]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *plans* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a *curricular alignment* (pacing and subject matter demand by grades) for achieving **Rigorous Curriculum – Content** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *plans* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving **Rigorous Curriculum – Content** already prevalent in this school?
2. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* (a) (creates) a rigorous sequences of learning experiences/courses, and (b) a rigorous curriculum in all classes, in order to achieve **Rigorous Curriculum—Content** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: RC-I]
- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving **Rigorous Curriculum – Content** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SCLC-AS&P [Student Centered Learning Climate—Academic Support & Press]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* a *student centered learning climate* with *academic support & press* (press for academic achievement in their classrooms, classroom personalism, classroom behavior, academic engagement, peer support for academic work) for achieving **Rigorous Curriculum – Content** already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-CA [Instructional Guidance—Curriculum Alignment]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a *curricular alignment* (pacing and subject matter demand by grades) for achieving **Rigorous Curriculum – Content** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of

teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?

3. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***supports*** (a) (secures) the teaching materials necessary for a rigorous curriculum (b) teachers to teach a curriculum in consistent with state and national content standards, in order to achieve ***Rigorous Curriculum—Content*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: RC-S]
 - **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***supports instructional guidance*** (subject matter students study across grades) with an ***application emphasis*** (active student applications emphasis) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SCLA-AS&P [Student Centered Learning Climate—Academic Support & Press]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***supports a student centered learning climate*** with ***academic support & press*** (press for academic achievement in their classrooms, classroom personalism, classroom behavior, academic engagement, peer support for academic work) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
4. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***advocates*** for (a) for a rigorous curriculum that honors the diversity of students and their families (b) and challenges faculty to teach a rigorous curriculum to students at risk of failure, in order to achieve ***Rigorous Curriculum—Content*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: RC-A]
 - **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***advocates for instructional guidance*** (subject matter students study across grades) with an ***application emphasis*** (active student applications emphasis) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SCLC-AS&P [Student Centered Learning Climate—Academic Support & Press]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***advocates for a student centered learning climate*** with ***academic support & press*** (press for academic achievement in their classrooms, classroom personalism, classroom behavior, academic engagement, peer support for academic work) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
5. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***communicates*** (a) (discusses) state curriculum frameworks, and (b) (discusses) the importance of

addressing the same academic content in special and regular program, in order to achieve ***Rigorous Curriculum—Content*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school?

[CODE: RC-C]

- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SCLC-AS&P [Student Centered Learning Climate—Academic Support & Press]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* a *student centered learning climate* with *academic support & press* (press for academic achievement in their classrooms, classroom personalism, classroom behavior, academic engagement, peer support for academic work) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
6. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* (a) (evaluates) the extent to which all students complete a rigorous curricular program, and (b) (evaluates) the rigor of the program, in order to achieve ***Rigorous Curriculum—Content*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: RC-M]
- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SCLC-AS&P [Student Centered Learning Climate—Academic Support & Press]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* a *student centered learning climate* with *academic support & press* (press for academic achievement in their classrooms, classroom personalism, classroom behavior, academic engagement, peer support for academic work) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving ***Rigorous Curriculum – Content*** already prevalent in this school?

Other Possible Prompts/Follow Up Questions for any of the questions above:

1. What did that look like?
2. Why did it work?
3. Who else was involved?
4. What else happened as a result?
5. What else can you add?
6. Why did you try this strategy?
7. What made you think this would be successful?
8. How did this interview process make you think differently about your leadership practices?
9. What else should I have asked you about why you were scored high on *Rigorous Curriculum (Content)*?

Core Component: Quality Instruction and All Key Processes

You [name of principal] were scored at a high level in the area of ***Quality Instruction—Pedagogy*** on the VAL-ED Survey. I am trying to identify specific and particularized leadership practices that you may be using to have earned this rating on this 360-degree evaluation from self, your supervisor and the teachers in this school. I would like to ask you some questions about this area and will be interested in hearing your responses about the leadership practices that you have in place for ***planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring*** school activities that are related to the area of achieving ***Quality Instruction—Pedagogy*** (effective instructional practices that maximize student academic and social learning).

Starter Question: What does it mean to have ***Quality Instruction—Pedagogy*** at this school?

1. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** (a) instructional services for students with special needs using assessment data, and (b) a schedule that enables quality instruction, in order to achieve ***Quality Instruction—Pedagogy*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school?
[CODE: QI-P]
 - **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** for ***instructional guidance*** (subject matter students study across grades) with an ***application emphasis*** (active student applications emphasis) for achieving ***Quality Instruction—Pedagogy*** already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-BS [Instructional Guidance—Basic Skills]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** for ***instructional guidance*** (subject matter students study across grades) with a focus on ***basic skills*** (didactic teaching of

basic skills) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?

- **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *plans* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* that is prevalent in this school.
2. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* (a) (coordinates) efforts to improve instruction in all classes, and (b) recruits teachers with the expertise to deliver instruction that maximizes student learning, in order to achieve *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: QI-I]
- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-BS [Instructional Guidance—Basic Skills]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a focus on *basic skills* (didactic teaching of basic skills) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional

guidance system) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* that is prevalent in this school.

3. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* (a) collaborative among faculty to improve instruction that maximizes student learning, and (b) teachers' opportunities to improve their instructional practices, in order to achieve *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school?

[CODE: QI-S]

- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
- **IG-BS [Instructional Guidance—Basic Skills]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a focus on *basic skills* (didactic teaching of basic skills) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
- **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* that is prevalent in this school.
- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* prevalent in this school.

4. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* (a) for all students to regularly experience effective instruction, and (b) for opportunities for high quality instruction beyond the regular school day and school year, in order to achieve *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: QI-A]

- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-BS [Instructional Guidance—Basic Skills]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a focus on *basic skills* (didactic teaching of basic skills) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* for *professional capacity* (teacher’s capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* that is prevalent in this school.
5. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* (a) (discusses) instructional practices during faculty meetings, and (b) with faculty about removing barriers that prevent students from experiencing quality instruction, in order to achieve *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: QI-C]
- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* about *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-BS [Instructional Guidance—Basic Skills]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a focus on *basic skills* (didactic teaching of basic skills) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* about *professional capacity* (teacher’s capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* that is prevalent in this school.

6. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* (a) and evaluates how instructional time is used, and (b) evaluates teachers' instructional practices, in order to achieve *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: QI-M]
- **IG-AE [Instructional Guidance—Application Emphasis]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with an *application emphasis* (active student applications emphasis) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
 - **IG-BS [Instructional Guidance—Basic Skills]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *instructional guidance* (subject matter students study across grades) with a focus on *basic skills* (didactic teaching of basic skills) for achieving *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* already prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving a *Quality Instruction—Pedagogy* that is prevalent in this school.

Other Possible Prompts/Follow Up Questions for any of the questions above:

1. What did that look like?
2. Why did it work?
3. Who else was involved?
4. What else happened as a result?
5. What else can you add?
6. Why did you try this strategy?
7. What made you think this would be successful?

8. How did this interview process make you think differently about your leadership practices?
9. What else should I have asked you about why you were scored high on *Quality Instruction (Pedagogy)*?

Core Component: Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior

You [name of principal] were scored at a high level in the area of ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** on the VAL-ED Survey. I am trying to identify specific and particularized leadership practices that you may be using to have earned this rating on this 360-degree evaluation from self, your supervisor and the teachers in this school. I would like to ask you some questions about this area and will be interested in hearing your responses about the leadership practices that you have in place for ***planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring*** school activities that are related to the area of achieving ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** (integrated communities of professional practice in the service of student academic and social learning; healthy school environment in which student learning is the central focus).

Starter Question: What does it mean to have ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** at this school?

1. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** (a) programs and policies that promote discipline and order, and (b) for a positive environment in which student learning is the central focus, in order to achieve a ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [**CODE: CLPB-P**]
- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** for ***professional capacity*** (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for ***professional community*** (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving a ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** for ***professional capacity*** (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on ***work orientation*** (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** that is prevalent in this school.

- **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *plans* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* already prevalent in this school?
2. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* (a) a learning environment in which all students are known and cared for, and (b) (builds) a culture that honors academic achievement, in order to achieve a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CLPB-I]
- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *implements* *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* already prevalent in this school?
3. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* (a) (allocates) resources to build a culture focused on student learning, and (b) collaborative teams

to improve instruction, in order to achieve a ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CLPB-S]

- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***supports*** for ***professional capacity*** (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for ***professional community*** (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving a ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***supports*** for ***professional capacity*** (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on ***work orientation*** (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** that is prevalent in this school.
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school ***supports*** ***school leadership*** (driver for improvement) with a focus on ***inclusion/instructional leadership*** (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** already prevalent in this school?
4. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***advocates*** (a) a culture of learning that respects diversity of students, and (b) for students to be involved in the school community, in order to achieve a ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CLPB-A]
- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***advocates*** for ***professional capacity*** (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for ***professional community*** (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving a ***Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*** that is prevalent in this school.

- **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* for *professional capacity* (teacher’s capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* already prevalent in this school?
5. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* (a) with parents about the aspects of a positive school culture, and (b) (discusses) standards of professional behavior with faculty, in order to achieve a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CLPB-C]
- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* regarding *professional capacity* (teacher’s capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what’s happening/or not, do we know what’s working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* for *professional capacity* (teacher’s capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community

influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* already prevalent in this school?

6. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* (a) the participation of every student in the social and academic activities, and (b) (assesses) the culture of the school from students' perspectives, in order to achieve a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CLPB-M]
- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PC-WO [Professional Capacity—Work Orientation]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a focus on *work orientation* (teachers are willing to try new things, they are encouraged to stretch and grow, they would recommend this school to others, they are loyal to this school) for achieving a *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior* already prevalent in this school?

Other Possible Prompts/Follow Up Questions for any of the questions above:

1. What did that look like?
2. Why did it work?
3. Who else was involved?
4. What else happened as a result?
5. What else can you add?
6. Why did you try this strategy?
7. What made you think this would be successful?
8. How did this interview process make you think differently about your leadership practices?

9. What else should I have asked you about why you were scored high on *Culture of Learning and Professional Behavior*?

Core Component: Connections to External Communities and All Key Processes

You [name of principal] were scored at a high level in the area of ***Connections to External Communities*** on the VAL-ED Survey. I am trying to identify specific and particularized leadership practices that you may be using to have earned this rating on this 360-degree evaluation from self, your supervisor and the teachers in this school. I would like to ask you some questions about this area and will be interested in hearing your responses about the leadership practices that you have in place for ***planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring*** school activities that are related to the area of achieving ***Connections to External Communities*** (linkages to family and/or other people and institutions in the community that advance academic and social learning).

Starter Question: What does it mean to have ***Connections to External Communities*** at this school?

1. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** (a) for school/community relations that revolves around the academic missions, and (b) for community outreach programs consistent with instructional goals, in order to achieve ***Connections to External Communities*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school?
[CODE: CEC-P]

➤ **PCST-TtC [Parent Community School Ties—Teacher Ties to Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** for ***parent community school ties*** focused on ***teacher ties to community*** (teachers' knowledge of community, personal ties to community, use of community resources for teaching) for achieving ***Connections to External Communities*** that is prevalent in this school.

➤ **PCST-PI [Parent Community School Ties—Parent Involvement]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***plans*** for ***parent community school ties*** focused on ***parent involvement*** (teachers outreach to parents, parents involvement in school) for achieving ***Connections to External Communities*** that is prevalent in this school.

2. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school ***implements*** (a) programs to help address community needs, and (b) (builds) business partnerships to support social and academic learning, in order to achieve ***Connections to External Communities*** (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CEC-I]

- **PCST-TtC [Parent Community School Ties—Teacher Ties to Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* *parent community school ties* focused on *teacher ties to community* (teachers' knowledge of community, personal ties to community, use of community resources for teaching) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PCST-PI [Parent Community School Ties—Parent Involvement]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *parent community school ties* focused on *parent involvement* (teachers outreach to parents, parents involvement in school) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.
3. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* (a) (secures) additional resources through partnering with external agencies to enhance teaching and learning, and (b) (allocates) resource that build family and community partnerships to advance student learning, in order to achieve *Connections to External Communities* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CEC-S]
- **PCST-TtC [Parent Community School Ties—Teacher Ties to Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* *parent community school ties* focused on *teacher ties to community* (teachers' knowledge of community, personal ties to community, use of community resources for teaching) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PCST-PI [Parent Community School Ties—Parent Involvement]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* for *parent community school ties* focused on *parent involvement* (teachers outreach to parents, parents involvement in school) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.
4. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* (a) (promotes) mechanisms for reaching families who are least comfortable at school, and, (b) (challenges) teachers to work with community agencies to support students at risk, in order to achieve *Connections to External Communities* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CEC-A]
- **PCST-TtC [Parent Community School Ties—Teacher Ties to Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* *parent community school ties* focused on *teacher ties to community* (teachers' knowledge of community, personal ties to community, use of community resources for teaching) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.

- **PCST-PI [Parent Community School Ties—Parent Involvement]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* for *parent community school ties* focused on *parent involvement* (teachers outreach to parents, parents involvement in school) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.
5. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* (a) (listens) to feedback from the community, and (b) (listens) to the diverse opinions and needs of all families, in order to achieve *Connections to External Communities* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CEC-C]
- **PCST-TtC [Parent Community School Ties—Teacher Ties to Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* *parent community school ties* focused on *teacher ties to community* (teachers' knowledge of community, personal ties to community, use of community resources for teaching) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PCST-PI [Parent Community School Ties—Parent Involvement]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* for *parent community school ties* focused on *parent involvement* (teachers outreach to parents, parents involvement in school) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.
6. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* (a) (collects) information to learn about resources and assets in the community, and (b) the effectiveness of community-school connections, in order to achieve *Connections to External Communities* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: CEC-M]
- **PCST-TtC [Parent Community School Ties—Teacher Ties to Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* *parent community school ties* focused on *teacher ties to community* (teachers' knowledge of community, personal ties to community, use of community resources for teaching) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.
 - **PCST-PI [Parent Community School Ties—Parent Involvement]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *parent community school ties* focused on *parent involvement* (teachers outreach to parents, parents involvement in school) for achieving *Connections to External Communities* that is prevalent in this school.

Other Possible Prompts/Follow Up Questions for any of the questions above:

1. What did that look like?
2. Why did it work?
3. Who else was involved?
4. What else happened as a result?
5. What else can you add?
6. Why did you try this strategy?
7. What made you think this would be successful?
8. How did this interview process make you think differently about your leadership practices?
9. What else should I have asked you about why you were scored high on on *Connections to External Communities*?

Component: Performance Accountability All Key Processes

You [name of principal] were scored at a high level in the area of *Performance Accountability* on the VAL-ED Survey. I am trying to identify specific and particularized leadership practices that you may be using to have earned this rating on this 360-degree evaluation from self, your supervisor and the teachers in this school. I would like to ask you some questions about this area and will be interested in hearing your responses about the leadership practices that you have in place for *planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring* school activities that are related to the area of achieving *Performance Accountability* (leadership holds itself and others responsible for realizing high standards of performance for student academic and social learning, individual and collective responsibility among the professional staff and students) .

Starter Question: What does it mean to have *Performance Accountability* at this school?

1. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *plans* (a) for individual and collective accountability among faculty for student learning, and (b) for emphasizing accountability to stakeholders for student academic and social learning, in order to achieve *Performance Accountability* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: PA-P]
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *plans* for *school leadership* with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-CHR [Professional Capacity—Changes in Human Resources]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *plans* *professional capacity*

(teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) and *changes in human resources* (capacity to hire quality teachers and remove problematic teachers, and the intensity with which they pursued both) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school?

- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *plans* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school.
2. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* (a) (uses) faculty input to create methods to hold faculty accountable, and (b) social and academic accountability equitable for all students, in order to achieve *Performance Accountability* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: PA-I]
- **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Performance Accountability* already prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-CHR [Professional Capacity—Changes in Human Resources]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) and *changes in human resources* (capacity to hire quality teachers and remove problematic teachers, and the intensity with which they pursued both) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *implements* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional

guidance system) for achieving a *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school.

3. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* (a) (allocates) time to evaluate student learning, and (b) time to evaluate faculty for student learning, in order to achieve *Performance Accountability* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: PA-S]
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *supports* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Performance Accountability* already prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-CHR [Professional Capacity—Changes in Human Resources]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) and *changes in human resources* (capacity to hire quality teachers and remove problematic teachers, and the intensity with which they pursued both) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *supports* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school.
4. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* (a) (challenges) faculty who blame others for student failure, and (b) that all students are accountable for achieving high levels of performance in both academic and social learning, in order to achieve *Performance Accountability* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: PA-A]
 - **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of

teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Performance Accountability* already prevalent in this school?

- **PC-CHR [Professional Capacity—Changes in Human Resources]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* *professional capacity* (teacher’s capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) and *changes in human resources* (capacity to hire quality teachers and remove problematic teachers, and the intensity with which they pursued both) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *advocates* for *professional capacity* (teacher’s capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what’s happening/or not, do we know what’s working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school.
5. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* (a) (discusses) progress toward meeting school goals with parents, and (b) to faculty how accountability results will be used for school improvement, in order to achieve *Performance Accountability* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: PA-C]
- **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* about *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Performance Accountability* already prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-CHR [Professional Capacity—Changes in Human Resources]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* about *professional capacity* (teacher’s capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) and *changes in human resources* (capacity to hire quality teachers and remove problematic teachers, and the intensity with which they pursued both) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school?
 - **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *communicates* about *professional*

capacity (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school.

6. How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* (a) (analyzes) the influence of faculty evaluations on the rigor of the curriculum, and (b) the accuracy and appropriateness of data used for student accountability, in order to achieve *Performance Accountability* (or synonyms provided by principal from starter question) that is prevalent in this school? [CODE: PA-M]

- **SL-I/IL [School Leadership—Inclusive/Instructional Leadership]:** How do you engage our faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *school leadership* (driver for improvement) with a focus on *inclusion/instructional leadership* (reaching out to faculty encouraging parent community involvement, extent of teacher involvement in school decisions, parent and community influence on school improvement efforts) for achieving *Performance Accountability* already prevalent in this school?
- **PC-CHR [Professional Capacity—Changes in Human Resources]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) and *changes in human resources* (capacity to hire quality teachers and remove problematic teachers, and the intensity with which they pursued both) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school?
- **PC-PC [Professional Capacity—Professional Community]:** How do you engage your faculty to ensure that this school *monitors* for *professional capacity* (teacher's capacity to problem solve regarding classroom concerns and to coordinate instructional work) with a mindset for *professional community* (teacher classroom work public for colleague and external consultant examination; critical dialogue about what's happening/or not, do we know what's working or not, collaboration among teachers to strengthen the instructional guidance system) for achieving *Performance Accountability* that is prevalent in this school.

Other Possible Prompts/Follow Up Questions for any of the questions above:

1. What did that look like?
2. Why did it work?
3. Who else was involved?
4. What else happened as a result?

5. What else can you add?
6. Why did you try this strategy?
7. What made you think this would be successful?
8. How did this interview process make you think differently about your leadership practices?
9. What else should I have asked you about why you were scored high on *Performance Accountability*?

APPENDIX C

NARRATIVE INQUIRY INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Think of one memory you have of developing, implementing, or the emergence of your successful leadership practice (and I could actually name one or more of the leadership practices identified earlier in this study). Tell me about it.
2. Thinking back to that time (of that developing/emerging leadership practice), what do you remember?
3. If there was one main memory of this time of putting strong leadership practices in place, it would be
4. Within this effort of putting strong leadership practices in place to support ELA-learners, do you remember a particularly stressful period?
5. How would you say has it influenced you?
6. What role did others play in this event (efforts toward implementing LP) (critical others)?
7. If there was one thing you would say about that event (LP efforts) it would be
8. How would you describe or tell of the challenging influence and long lasting effects?

APPENDIX D

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS AND INDICATORS CODING FRAMEWORK

ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS (ES) – INDICATORS (I)	(ES)	(I)	ES-I CODES
School Leadership – School Leadership	SL	LIL	SL-LIL
Parent-Community-School Ties – Teacher’s Ties to the Community	PCST	TIC	PCST-TIC
Parent-Community-School Ties – Parent Involvement	PCST	PI	PCST-PI
Professional Capacity – Teacher Background	PC	TB	PC-TB
Professional Capacity – Frequency of Professional Development	PC	FPD	PC-FPD
Professional Capacity – Quality of Professional Development	PC	QPD	PC-QPD
Professional Capacity – Changes in Human Resources	PC	CHR	PC-CHR
Professional Capacity – Work Orientation	PC	WO	PC-WO
Professional Capacity – Professional Community	PC	PC	PC-PC
Student Centered Learning Climate – Safety and Order	SCLC	S&O	SCLC-S&O
Student Centered Learning Climate – Academic Support and Press	SCLC	AS&P	SCLC-AS&P
Instructional Guidance – Curriculum Alignment	IG	CA	IG-CA
Instructional Guidance – Basic Skills	IG	BS	IG-BS
Instructional Guidance – Application Emphasis	IG	AE	IG-AE

Note: Shaded rows are not included in interview protocol questions.

APPENDIX E ES-I Codes within the VAL-ED Codes						
ES-I CODES	KEY PROCESSES					
CORE COMPONENTS	Plan	Implement	Support	Advocate	Communicate	Monitor
High Standards	HS-P IG-CA IG-AE	HS-I IG-CA IG-AE	HS-S IG-CA IG-AE SCLC-AS&P	HS-A IG-CA IG-AE	HS-C IG-CA IG-AE	HS-M IG-CA IG-AE
Rigorous Curriculum	RC-P IG-AE SCLC-AS&P IG-CA SL-SL	RC-I IG-AE SCLC-AS&P IG-CA SL-SL	RC-S IG-AE SCLC-AS&P	RC-A IG-AE SCLC-AS&P	RC-C IG-AE SCLC-AS&P	RC-M IG-AE SCLC-AS&P SL-SL
Quality Instruction	QI-P IG-AE IG-BS PC-WO	QI-I IG-AE IG-BS PC-WO PC-PC	QI-S IG-AE IG-BS PC-WO PC-PC	QI-A IG-AE IG-BS PC-WO	QI-C IG-AE IG-BS PC-WO	QI-M IG-AE IG-BS PC-WO PC-PC
Culture of Learning /Professional Behavior	CLPB-P PC-PC PC-WO SL-UIL	CLPB-I PC-PC PC-WO SL-UIL	CLPB-S PC-PC PC-WO SL-UIL	CLPB-A PC-PC PC-WO	CLPB-C PC-PC PC-WO SL-UIL	CLPB-M PC-PC PC-WO
Connection to External Communities	CEC-P PCST-JDC PCST-PI	CEC-I PCST-JDC PCST-PI	CEC-S PCST-JDC PCST-PI	CEC-A PCST-JDC PCST-PI	CEC-C PCST-JDC PCST-PI	CEC-M PCST-JDC PCST-PI
Performance Accountability	PA-P SL-UIL PC-CHER C-PC	PA-I SL-UIL PC-CHER PC-PC	PA-S SL-UIL PC-CHER PC-PC	PA-A SL-UIL PC-CHER PC-PC	PA-C SL-UIL PC-CHER PC-PC	PA-M SL-SL PC-CHER PC-PC

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